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# BEIJING TODAY

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## Wang Meng takes China's first gold in Turin



Wang Meng (front) won the women's 500m short track speedskating Wednesday night, taking China's first gold medal in the Turin Winter Olympic Games.

The Olympic debutant led all the way to clock 44.345 seconds, winning the nation's third winter Olympic gold after Yang Yang's two in 2002.

(Full story on Page 4)

Xinhua Photo

## Pandas too pricey for US zoos

### Three zoos consider sending back pandas

By Jackie Zhang

Three US zoos – Zoo Atlanta, Memphis Zoo and San Diego Zoo – are planning to renegotiate with the Chinese government to reduce the cost of renting pandas. “If no agreement with China can be made, the zoos may have to return their star attractions,” Dennis W. Kelly, chief executive of Zoo Atlanta, was quoted as saying in the *New York Times* this week.

Susan Elliott, press officer at Zoo Atlanta, confirmed the story this Wednesday, saying “The zoos now are planning to renegotiate with China about reducing the rent.”

“We also read this in the newspapers,” said Liu Xiongying, of the State Forestry Administration's press office. “However, we have not received any formal request from the United States, and so we cannot comment on the matter yet.”

The three zoos are all currently experiencing financial difficulties. They have to pay one million dollars annually for renting the pandas and another million for financing research and conservation projects in the United States and in China. If cubs are born, the annual fee increases by an average of US\$ 600,000.

The zoos have also hired specialist staff to care for the pandas and have to spend a great deal of money to cover the animals' daily living expenses.

Zoo Atlanta has a curator, three full-time keepers and one backup keeper to care for Lun Lun and Yang Yang, their two pandas. A crew of six travels around Georgia six days a week, harvesting bamboo from 400 volunteers who grow it in their backyards. Each of the pandas requires an expensive diet including 84 pounds of bamboo a day.

The pandas are certainly famous in the United States. “People will get up in the

middle of the night to see the pandas,” said Don Lindburg, head of the giant panda program at San Diego Zoo. “I don't think there is a comparable animal.”

However, after the first year, the number of people coming to see the pandas declined yet the expense of keeping them remained high.



Yang Yang (left) and Lun Lun of Zoo Atlanta

Photo by Steve Schaefer

A staff member at the Wolong National Nature Reserve in Sichuan Province, China's main panda breeding and conservation center, confirmed that all the pandas in foreign countries were rented.

The contract between the American zoos and the Chinese side is a ten year deal. The San Diego Zoo's contract is the first to expire in 2008 and the last contract, with Memphis Zoo, will end in 2013.

Mr. Kelley said that he hoped China would consider the request to reduce the fees as most other countries pay far less for their pandas. He said that Australia and Thailand paid about US\$ 300,000 each year for their pandas.

However, the National Zoo in Washington, another American zoo that has rented pandas from China, said that it would not join the three zoos in pursuing this issue. Their spokesperson, Peper Long, told the *Oriental Morning Post* that the statement from Zoo Atlanta did not represent their attitude.

The birth of the cub Tai Shan has brought a flood of visitors to the National Zoo. “There is no doubt that Tai Shan has attracted crowds to the zoo. However, our zoo is a non-governmental organization; we do not charge for entry. We have been losing money in renting the two pandas,” said Long.

Long said the zoo wanted to help protect pandas, a highly endangered species.

## Three Chinese engineers killed in Pakistan

Chinese President Hu Jintao expressed deep concern for the safety of Chinese engineers working in Pakistan after gunmen killed three Chinese there on Wednesday.

Informed about the murder Wednesday evening, Hu Jintao ordered China's Foreign Ministry, embassy and consulates to require Pakistan to catch the murderers,

ensure the safety of Chinese citizens there and properly handle the aftermath.

Three Chinese engineers and their Pakistani driver were killed on Wednesday when their car were attacked by gunmen on a road in the town of Hub, some 700 km southeast of Quetta. Three other Chinese also in the car survived without injury.

The bodies of the three dead were brought to a hospital in the country's southern city of Karachi early yesterday morning. They will be flown back to China on a specially chartered plane in a few days, according to consulate officials. Eleven Chinese working in the Hub area also arrived in Karachi.

(Xinhua)

## Spanish custom agents arrested for extorting Chinese travelers

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Spain's embassy in China has confirmed that 19 Spanish custom officers at Malaga airport have been arrested for extorting money from non-European Union passengers, especially Chinese travelers. Five of them have been jailed and 14 granted conditional release.

Passengers reported the extortion and bribes to the Civil Guard in Malaga last week. Police gathered plenty of evidence, including airport camera recordings, showing illegal charging was indeed taking place. Chinese travelers were targeted and charged up to 50 euros (about 480 yuan) to be allowed to pass customs, when excess

food, tobacco, alcohol or other prohibited products were found in their luggage.

Mr Gregorio Laso Mostoles, Press Counselor at the Spanish Embassy in Beijing, said that it was the first time that such a scandal had been uncovered in Spain. He also pointed out that Chinese passengers should have reported any unfair or illegal treatment to the local authorities to stop such corruption earlier. He emphasized the importance for both travelers and local officials to follow the custom regulations, whether in Spain or China.

According to members of the Chinese community in Spain, such extortion has become such an established ‘custom’ in it-

self that they all warn their friends and relatives to prepare at least 50 euros when traveling through Malaga airport.

The Civil Guard investigation is still ongoing. The arrested officers admitted in statements that some of them had threatened passengers with refusal of entry if they did not pay the bribe. They claimed that taking small bribes was common practice for many customs officers. An official from the Civil Guard said that further arrests are expected as the investigation continues.

Major Mardim Sandijo, spokesperson for the Civil Guard Headquarters in Madrid, expressed his regret that such corruption existed at the gateway to Spain.

## Cancer concerns at DuPont factory

By Chu Meng

A new report yesterday morning from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said that the chemicals used to make Teflon might cause cancer.

Teflon is a household name in non-stick cookware and stain resistant carpet. DuPont's Fayetteville Works is the only plant that the company uses to produce Teflon cookware. The chemical linked to the cancer risk is ammonia perfluorooctanoate (PFOA) and is essential in the manufacture of non-stick pans. PFOA is believed to completely disperse into the environment during production, and should not remain in any final product.

“Many people have assumed that PFOA is found in our Teflon non-stick cookware. PFOA might be linked to cancer. But this is actually its presence in the environment such as the air, water or plant life around the factory. You can see clearly from the EPA's re-

port that it is a chemical emitted into the environment, and is not found in our final products. Also, DuPont has no factory in China,” Zhang Yunfang, a PR officer for DuPont China, said yesterday.

American scientists discovered traces of the chemical near the plant in soil and water. The EPA first has said PFOA may cause cancer since 2003, and people living near the DuPont plant are worried.

Yesterday morning, the EPA's Scientific Consultant Commission released the results of a more thorough investigation into contamination near Fayetteville's DuPont plant. Scientists from the commission said that the chemical PFOA is very likely to cause cancer. EPA is compiling a report on how dangerous PFOA is and its possible links to cancer, but there is as yet no word on when this will be released.

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# Building efficiency to save energy

## Pilot projects to green construction industry

By Qiu Jiaoning

Pilot projects for energy efficient buildings that could help reduce energy use by up to 65 percent will be launched in four municipalities including Beijing and cities in the cold north of China, the Ministry of Construction announced yesterday.

In addition, 50 centers for the industrial production of new walling materials and energy efficient building products will be developed.

Over the next five years, 40 demonstration projects on low-level and extra-low-level energy consuming buildings and 'green' buildings will be undertaken.

### Construction

China is urbanizing and industrializing rapidly. Approximately two billion square meters of new buildings go up every year, accounting for almost half of the annual global construction, Qiu Baoxing, vice minister of the Ministry of Construction, said yesterday.

Newly constructed buildings and the existing 40 billion square meter floor area of buildings influence not only the sustainable development of China, but also the world economy and global climate, Qiu said.

### Energy saving

The Ministry has carried out a nationwide inspection at building energy saving, covering all local work on building energy efficiency since 2003. The number of inspected building projects totaled 280. Of these, 30 projects were issued with legal notices for violating compulsory design standards for energy efficiency.

Meanwhile, administrative departments responsible for construction have been requested to further penalize those undertaking the substandard projects.

The inspection revealed that northern regions are doing better than the south. The design of 90 percent of the new residential buildings in big cities in the cold north has complied with energy-saving standards.

However, a problem remains that often during actual construction only parts of the buildings are built in accordance with these designs.

### Supervision

"The supervision system will be further improved, with the emphasis on the enforcement of mandatory standards for building energy efficiency throughout the construction process," Qiu said.

In order to further promote the development of green architecture, the Second International Conference on Technologies for Intelligent and Green Building and the Second International Expo on New Tech and Products for Intelligent and Green Buildings are to be held in Beijing from March 28 to 30.

Several construction administration and other related organizations from the UK, US, Canada, France, India, Singapore and elsewhere are co-hosting this meeting.

### Brief News

#### Labor surplus

China will see a large surplus, estimated to be some 14 million people, in its labor supply this year, according to a recent forecast from the State Development and Reform Commission.

#### New jobs for laid-off workers

Some 5.1 million laid-off workers found new employment in 2005. Of these, 1.1 million were in the 40 to 50 age group. The figures came from the State Development and Reform Commission.

#### Disaster death-toll

Close to 12,000 people in China lost their lives in various natural disasters over the past five years, said Li Ligu, deputy minister of civil affairs.

#### Police suspensions

10,034 policemen have been suspended from duties for breaches of discipline over the past nine years, the Ministry of Public Security said.

#### Rural workers choose construction

An investigation by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security found that nearly one-fifth of rural migrants choose to work in the construction industry.

#### Food poisoning

There were 54 serious food poisoning cases reported during the fourth quarter of last year. These led to 1,897 people becoming sick and the deaths of 39, the Health Ministry said.

#### Rail transport

China's railways carried 1.154 billion passengers in 2005, up 3.3 percent year-on-year and hitting a decade high, according to the Ministry of Railways.

#### Power from Three Gorges plant

China Yangtze River Three Gorges Project Development Corporation said Friday its power plant had generated 100 billion kwh of electricity as of February 10 of this year.

#### China's airlines buy American

Of the 863 civil aircraft in operation in China in November 2005, 534 were supplied by US aviation giant Boeing, said Li Jiaxiang, president of China National Aviation Holding Company.

#### Mobile phone exports surge

China exported a total of 228 million mobile phone units in 2005, up 56 percent from the previous year, the Ministry of Commerce said.

#### Energy sector imports technology

China's energy industry, a sector that includes power production and supply, coal mining, petroleum and natural gas supply, imported 1,700 items of technology with a combined contract value of US\$9.34 billion in the 2001-2005, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

#### Refining posts losses

China's oil refineries registered a loss of about 30 billion yuan (US\$3.7 billion) in 2005, according to the State Development and Reform Commission.

#### Overseas trade growth

China's foreign trade volume totaled US\$120.49 billion in January, up 26.8 percent year-on-year, the General Administration of Customs said.

(By Feng Nianhua)



## Speeders beware!

Forty electronic speed scanners have been installed throughout Beijing, in both downtown areas and suburbs, to monitor car speed. The police set up road signs this week along main roads, warning drivers about the new cameras.

Xinhua Photo

## China's aviation sector set to double

By Qiu Jiaoning

The total volume of China's air traffic, including passengers, air cargo and mail, will double its 2005 level by the end of 2010, according to the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC) recent briefing on the 11th Five Year Plan.

China has the fastest-growing market for aircraft in the world, and some 100 planes and 1,000 pilots are expected to be added to civil aviation fleets here in each of the coming five years, said Gao Hongfeng, deputy director of the CAAC. However, major challenges remain in maintaining the quality of aircrew and training good and experienced pilots, said Gao.

China will continue to encourage foreign and private investment in the country's airlines, said Gao, but he emphasized that the first priority is safety. Three private airlines - Okay, Spring and Eagle - have been approved to start operations, and a further seven are seeking approval. Regulations restrict foreign investment to no more than a 49 percent ownership of any Chinese carrier, with individual overseas investors limited to a 25 percent stake.

The number of airline passengers reached 138 million last year, up 105 percent from 2000. The amount of cargo and airmail rose 14 percent, to 3.04 million tons, an increase of 89 percent from 2000. By the end of 2005, the industry had a fleet of 863 transport aircraft, an increase of 336 on the figure from 2000.

Between 2000 and 2005, total fixed asset investment across the sector amounted to 94.7 billion yuan.

"There are great challenges in balancing the different needs of airlines, airports and air traffic control," Gao said.

The country's seven state-owned airlines earned a combined total profit of 10 billion yuan during the period of the 10th Five Year Plan, Gao said.

Gao added that profits in the aviation sector are relatively low because the capital costs involved are very large.

Although China is gradually allowing airlines to set their own prices within official guidelines, margins could be further enhanced by continued liberalization.

"We are going to further loosen the control on ticket prices and make more efforts to further liberalize the markets over the next five years," Gao said.

## Sites closed in Internet piracy crackdown

By Qiu Jiaoning

Seventy-six websites were closed down in a four-month crackdown on online copyright infringements and piracy between September and December 2005, the National Copyright Administration of China (NCA) said on Wednesday.

With the cooperation of local police and telecommunication authorities, local copyright offices have investigated and dealt with 172 cases concerning online copyright infringements, 28 of which involved serious violations, said Yan Xiaohong, deputy commissioner of NCA. International rights holders or organizations reported half of the 28 cases.

During this first major government campaign against online

piracy, the NCA meted out fines totaling 798,000 yuan to the operators of 29 web sites and transferred 18 of the cases to the courts for criminal prosecution.

In one case, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) complained to the NCA that Beijing Online Jiuzhou Information Technology Service was providing online streaming and downloads of movies without permission and for profit. After investigation, the Beijing-based company was ordered to stop this piracy and was fined 90,000 yuan.

Both the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry and the MPAA had expressed their hope for enhanced cooperation to crack down on Internet infringement and piracy.

## Beijing river water below national standards

By Han Manman

Water quality in 70 percent of rivers in Beijing was below national standards last year, the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau said.

According to the bureau, Beijing has more than 100 rivers and 84 reservoirs.

A survey of these found that the Miyun Reservoir and other sources of drinking water had acceptable water

quality, but that quality was poor in most of the rivers in outlying districts.

Of the 78 rivers that the bureau monitored, 56 rivers are below standard.

More worryingly, 47 of the rivers were given a final evaluation of "severely poor quality level," and a third of the 19 lakes in downtown Beijing were evaluated as having 'terrible' water quality, the bureau said.

"We will have better cooperation and exchanges with international organizations so as to enhance our capability to better fight Internet piracy," Yan said. He added that the NCA was considering signing two new international treaties to help fight digital piracy.

Latest figures show there are now more than 110 million Internet users and 690,000 websites in China.

As of the end of October 2005, the NCA had received 1,042 tip-offs concerning infringements and piracy of literary works, music, films, software, games and other copyrighted works, according to Yan.

Yan said that China is preparing a new law on the issue within the year.

Shi Hanmin, director of the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau, said that more measures will be introduced this year to improve water quality.

These will include drafting a plan for the prevention and control of water pollution, regular publication of the results of water monitoring, and speeding up the construction of water treatment facilities.

## China issues HIV control guidelines

By Han Manman

The government Sunday made public new regulations to prevent and control the spread of HIV virus and to protect the rights of people with HIV/AIDS, as part of a long term strategy to eventually win the fight against the deadly disease.

The Regulation on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, issued by the State Council on January 18, will take effect from March 1.

### Prevention

All public places designated by provincial or municipal governments will now be legally obliged to make condoms available or face penalties.

People with HIV are now responsible for telling their spouses, sexual

partners and doctors about their positive status. Anyone intentionally infecting others will be punished

Governments above the county level must take a leading role in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS. This includes setting up coordinating mechanisms, and specifying the responsibilities of and supervising to relevant departments.

People living with HIV/AIDS and AIDS patients have new obligations, including informing their sexual partners and doctors, and they must take measures to prevent passing on the virus to others.

### Protection

The new regulation protects the rights and privacy of people with HIV/

AIDS. No employer or individual can discriminate against people with HIV/AIDS or their relatives. Rights to marriage, employment, medical care and education are now protected by law.

The new protections mean that no organization or individual can disclose the names, addresses, or work places of people with HIV/AIDS, or their relatives, without express permission.

The government will also lower or waive school fees for AIDS orphans of poor families and HIV positive minors.

Hospitals and other medical agencies cannot refuse treatment for or seek to transfer out HIV/AIDS patients.

### Treatment

Governments above county-level

must provide free anti-HIV/AIDS drugs for rural patients and underprivileged urban patients, and offer free treatment and consultations on prevention of mother-baby infection to mothers-to-be.

### Scale of problem

On January 25, China announced it has 75,000 AIDS cases, the latest figure jointly calculated by the Ministry of Health, UNAIDS and the World Health Organization (WHO). Another 650,000 people are HIV positive. The joint report warns that up to 10 million people in China could be infected by 2010.

AIDS now ranks as the third most deadly disease in China after tuberculosis and rabies.



Weekly Review – World

### Fed chief hints at further rate rises

Ben Bernanke, Federal Reserve chairman, said on Wednesday that interest rates might have to rise to prevent the US economy overheating but inflation remains moderate.

Mr. Bernanke, giving evidence before Congress for the first time since taking over from Alan Greenspan, made an assured debut.

He told the House financial services committee: "The risk exists that, with aggregate demand exhibiting considerable momentum, output could overshoot its sustainable path, leading ultimately – in the absence of countervailing monetary policy action – to further upward pressure on inflation."

"In these circumstances, the FOMC judged that some further firming of monetary policy may be necessary, an assessment with which I concur."

– FT

### Nokia says starts shipping 3G phone to DoCoMo

Top global handset maker Nokia has started shipping a 3G phone to Japanese mobile operator NTT DoCoMo Inc., the Finnish group said in a statement on yesterday.

The phone, to be marketed as the FOMA NM850iG, is expected to be commercially available in Japan from February 24, Nokia said.

DoCoMo said in May 2005 it aimed to launch a high-speed third-generation phone made by Nokia in the second half of that year.

– Reuters

### Microsoft eyes multiple versions of new Office 2007

Microsoft Corp. unveiled on Wednesday multiple versions of its upcoming Office business software suite with features that aim to simplify worker collaboration and improve efficiency.

The 2007 Microsoft Office, previously code-named Microsoft Office 12, is the successor to its Office business application franchise, which packages together word processing, spreadsheet, presentation and other programs.

The upgrade to Office and a separate upgrade to the Windows operating system planned for later this year are crucial for Microsoft since those two businesses account for more than half of the company's total revenue.

In the second half of 2006 Microsoft is scheduled to launch an upgraded version of Office with redesigned user interface which aims to simplify the task of finding features already available within its family of programs, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access and Outlook.

Microsoft last launched an Office upgrade in September 2003.

– Reuters

### Merrill, BlackRock hint at further deals

Merrill Lynch and BlackRock, which on Wednesday unveiled an US\$19 billion merger of their investment management businesses, signaled that further deals were possible as consolidation in the sector gathered pace.

Larry Fink, who will stay on as chief executive of BlackRock, said it was important that the combined business retained a separate stock market listing to provide "acquisition currency" ahead of "large-scale consolidation" in the asset management industry.

Stan O'Neal, chief executive of Merrill, which is swapping its investment management business for a 49.8 percent stake in the highly rated BlackRock, said it had the right to top up its holding if the company issued shares for acquisitions. "We are not looking to diminish our exposure to this attractive business."

Both companies' shares rose in spite of the poor record of many asset management mergers. Blackrock gained another 4 percent to US\$151.25 billion, valuing it US\$9.68 billion.

– FT

(Edited by Grace Wei / Victor Bai)

# China opens A-shares to foreign investors

By Chu Meng

Getting into China's A-share market will be made easier for foreign companies thanks to the publication of regulations and practical procedures listed on the China Securities Depository Trust and Clearing Co. website.

The company said it was ready to accept applications from foreign strategic investors to open RMB A-share accounts. The regulations are the latest in a series of moves by China to widen access for its A-

share stock market, not only to Qualified Foreign Institutional Investors, but also to Foreign Strategic Investors.

From now on these investors can operate substantial transactions on the Chinese mainland's Shanghai Stock Exchange and Shenzhen Stock Exchange, paving the way for them to directly buy shares in Chinese-listed firms for the first time.

"The signs are there that regulators have quietly quickened the pace of stock reforms, taking advantage of the recent

market rally," said Guotai Jun'an Securities senior analyst Xu Yinhui.

Foreign investors had been waiting for details after several government departments jointly issued the rules allowing them to take strategic stakes in publicly listed firms from the start of this year. According to the rules, foreign strategic investors' initial acquisition cannot be less than 10 percent of the listed firms' total share volume. And they cannot transfer acquired A-shares within the first three years.

## Sony faces more questions

By Fu Ruijuan

Just as their digital camera problems were fading from public consciousness, Sony China faces new quality questions, this time concerning their TVs.

Five TV models, including two LCD projections TV models and three LCD TV models, within a certain serial number range, have been found to have a software timing error. When the TV sets have been used for over 1,200 hours, problems with powering-off might emerge.

The four largest home appliance retailers in China, including Gome and Dazhong, have removed the problem TV sets from their shelves.

Kang Jian, a PR representative of Sony China, said there are still TV sets of these five models on the shelves and only the problem ones have been recalled. Sony will update the software on the faulty models and send them to retailers when the updating work is completed, according to Kang.

The problem TVs include: LCD Projection TV Model KF-E42A10 with serial numbers ranging from 5000001 to 5005139; LCD Projection TV Model KF-E50A10 from 5000001 to 5007705; LCD TV Model KLV-V26A10 from 5000001 to 5000430; LCD TV Model KLV-V 32A10 from 5000001 to 5001202; LCD TV

Model KLV-V40A10 from 5000001 to 5003447.

"Up till now, Sony China hasn't received any complaints from our consumers. Before consumers discovered any problems, Sony had identified the flaw and informed consumers to register for the free updating service," said Kang.

There have been around 17,000 problem TV sets sold on the Chinese mainland. Sony is offering a free software update service to all problem TV consumers till August 31, and the service would take about half an hour, according to Sony's announcement in Sony China's website.



## First joint-stock commercial bank opens for business early

China Bohai Bank, the first state-level joint-stock commercial bank in China, opened for business on yesterday in Tianjin, the leading port city in north China. Hong Kong-based Standard Chartered holds 19.99 percent of the stake, which makes it the second largest overseas shareholder.

Photo by CFP

## Allergy fears over McDonald's ingredients

By Chu Meng

McDonald's acknowledged this Monday that wheat and dairy ingredients are indeed used to flavor their french fries. The company had previously denied the claims.

Chinese food authorities said Wednesday that China has no such standards to detect or regulate the use of these elements. "We can not deny that the presence of those substances, such as peanuts, milk, eggs and wheat, can cause allergic or other medical reactions in food-sensitive consumers," said He Qiurong, spokeswoman from the State Food

and Drug Administration, Food Safety Supervision Department.

She also said, "However, we have no specific requirements asking Chinese food producers, be they packet food manufacturers, non-packet food manufacturers, or restaurants, to detect and label their use of wheat and dairy products."

Before Wednesday, McDonald's China had refused to say whether or not they would list these ingredients in Chinese characters on their packaging or they would warn the world's biggest consumer group that such elements could cause po-

tential allergic reactions in certain food-sensitive consumers.

McDonald's had said until recently that its fries were free of gluten, milk, or wheat allergens and are safe to eat for those with dietary issues related to the consumption of dairy items. But the fast-food company quietly added 'Contains wheat and milk ingredients' this month to the french fries listing on its website.

The acknowledgment has stirred anger and some concern among consumers on gluten-free diets since it was posted on McDonald's website.

### Outlook

## Bush lays part of blame for US trade deficit at China

China's 'tightly managed pegged exchange rate' and 'foreign exchange market intervention to limit currency appreciation' are partly to blame for the US's record trade deficit, the Bush administration says in a flagship economic report.

The 2006 Economic Report of the President said China's foreign exchange reserves had continued to rise, in spite of the announcement of a new currency regime in July. The administration used blunt language to describe China's exchange rate management, which it said was contributing to imbalances in China and in the global economy.

China's foreign exchange reserves could top US\$1,000 billion this year, the report said. The US current account deficit, the broadest measure of trade, stood at a record US\$726 billion in 2005, which accounts for 5.8 percent of gross domestic product.

– FT

### Analyst's Take:

Well, I was angry when I heard Bush's speech. The speech has hinted the US will be forced to brand China a currency 'manipulator' in its biannual report on international trade and foreign exchange unless the country demonstrates that its new currency system will lead to real appreciation over time. However, anyone who has paid any attention to China's new currency policy and its policy of implementation, anyone familiar with economics or Chi-

na's currency performance on the international stage would never come to that conclusion.

China revalued the yuan by 2.1 percent in July, scrapping the currency's decade-old peg against the dollar and set it free to float within tightly managed bands.

China will continue to push forward reforms according to the development of the situation and when it is most favorable to the international economy and China's economy. We are letting and will let it float more and more freely, depending upon more and more scientific policies.

China was in fact already letting market forces drive the yuan. The currency rose 0.14 percent last week, the biggest gain in any week since it was unshackled from the dollar. I think this is the result of market operations and what we want is to let the market mechanisms, based on supply and demand, play a role. We never intended to quicken the pace of the yuan's climb.

From the other aspect, how can America call themselves victims and call for global action to reduce imbalances of trade and capital flows, including the need to raise US national savings. In fact, America has gained a lot from Sino-US trade.

The core reason was not because China tightly managed the pegged exchange rate. Instead, it was because America's direct trade investment in China has showed a large surplus. And major international manufacturers have done well since they shifted their investment from America to China in bulk. Through Sino-US trade, America has gained enormous benefits, not only so-called imbalanced trade deficit.

– Zhao Xijun, vice dean of the School of Finance of Renmin University (Chu Meng)

Weekly Review – Nation



Zhang Jiaren, deputy president and CFO of Sinopec Photo by IC

### Sinopec to buy back four listed subsidiaries

China Petroleum & Chemical Corp. (Sinopec), China's largest oil refinery, announced on Wednesday that it would buy back its four listed subsidiaries with a cash offer of 14.3 billion yuan (US\$1.78 billion).

The four are: Sinopec Qilu Petrochemical Co., Sinopec Yangzi Petrochemical Co., Sinopec Zhongyuan Petroleum Co., and Sinopec Shengli Oil Field Dynamic Group Co.

Sinopec said it is offering shareholders of Qilu, Yangzi, Zhongyuan and Shengli 10.18 yuan, 13.95 yuan, 12.12 yuan and 10.30 yuan per share (respectively) higher than the companies' closing prices when they were de-listed from the domestic A-share market one week ago.

A board meeting earlier on Wednesday approved the deal, Sinopec said.

(Xinhua)

### Citigroup gets nod to raise stake in Pudong Bank

By Grace Wei

Citigroup Inc, the world's second biggest bank by assets, has won approval to increase its stake in Shanghai Pudong Development Bank Co. to the maximum allowed, as it seeks to capture a bigger share of China's US\$4.7 trillion banking sector.

Shareholders of the Chinese lender, who meet in Shanghai Wednesday, also agreed to free Citigroup from an exclusivity clause that prevents the New York-based lender from investing in a second Chinese bank.

The US company, which will have a 19.99 percent stake in Pudong Bank, originally bought 4.6 percent of the lender in 2003. Pudong Bank will sell the new shares to the Citigroup at a price to be determined by the market, after it has converted its non-tradable stock into common shares.

Pudong Bank will also sell 700 million new shares to the public before Citigroup raised its stake, according to sources.

### New Passat sells 10,000 in one month

By Fu Ruijuan

Shanghai Volkswagen has sold over 16,000 units of its new Passat model, Lingyu, since the sedan's first appearance on the market last November. Over 10,000 units had been sold in December.

The Passat Lingyu has been selling well ever since it first appeared on the market. In Beijing, the first Lingyu sedans on the market have been sold out.

In particular, the Passat Lingyu 1.8T AT model and 2.8 V6 model have been in a great demand. Consumers have to place an order to buy the cars.

The market demand is much higher than the real sales volume of 16,000 units, and there are still thousands of orders placed at the distributors, according to representative of SVW.

### Hutchison Pulls 3 Italia IPO

By Grace Wei

The already much-delayed IPO of 3 Italia, the Italian 3G mobile operation of Hutchison Whampoa Ltd., has finally been pulled after the Hong Kong-based conglomerate admitted it could not convince investors of the value of the stake it was seeking to offload.

Last week, Hutchison Whampoa revealed that it was delaying the Milan Stock Exchange IPO yet again, until later this year. It had been hoping to sell a 20 percent to 25 percent stake, which would have raised approximately 2.5 billion euros.

After the poor reception from investors, Hutchison Whampoa finally admitted defeat at the weekend and pulled the listing. The move effectively ends any hopes of similar listings from Hutchisons other 3G mobile operations. 3 UK had been expected to go to market sometime this year.

Now Hutchison is looking to sell 10 percent of 3 Italia in a private placement; this deal values the operation at a much more reasonable 9 billion euros.





Members of the Chinese team parade during the opening ceremony of the 2006 Winter Olympic Games at the Stadio Comunale in Turin, Italy, on February 10. Photo by CFP

By Li Ying

### Short track speed skating

China's gold drought in the Turin Winter Olympic Games was ended by Wang Meng, who won the women's 500-meter short track speed skating Wednesday night. The Olympic debutante led all the way to clock 44.345 seconds, winning the nation's third winter Olympic gold after Yang Yang's two in 2002 (also for short track speed skating). The 20-year-old Wang has now won four World Cup races over 500-meter, and proved herself as the most consistent short tracker in the world.

Like China's Athens Olympic champion Liu Xiang, Wang jumped to the podium and waved excitedly to the cheering crowd.

"Till I jumped onto the podium did I know my name had not yet been announced," Wang said, laughing. "I was just so excited and anxious to get onto the podium."

Her victory helped ease China's disappointment at losing an expected gold in the women's 500-meter long-track speed skating when World Cup leader Wang Manli came second to Russia's Svetlana Zhurova on Tuesday.

Wang Manli, a four-time Olympian deeply regretted the loss. "I'll miss the chance to win a gold medal. Now, I have the mixed feelings. Everybody has pressure but I didn't turn the pressure to motivation. She (Zhurova) is mentally stronger than me," she said, in tears.

Wang's fellow Chinese Ren Hui took to the third place in 76.87 seconds. The 23-year-old was on her maiden Olympic journey and was excited about the bronze medal.

"I never expected this. I gave my all in the second race and I made it to the podium"

Besides the women's team, Chinese speed skater Li Jiajun delighted Chinese crowds with a stunning upset on Sunday, winning a bronze medal in the men's 1,500-meter race, China's first medal in this Olympics.

The 31-year-old veteran skater, in his fourth and last Olympics, said he didn't even expect to make the final. He admits he was short of strength after racing too hard in the first two heats. But he assures all of China that he will have no problem with the 500-meter and 1,000-meter races scheduled for this Saturday and next Wednesday.

### Figure skating

Zhang Dan and Zhang Hao hugged, although they rarely did so on the ice. This time, they hugged not for the silver medal, but for the bitter-sweet experience they shared in the Turin Olympic Games.

Chinese figure skating pair 'the Zhangs', had aimed at a gold, but failed in the first and the most difficult move – the throw quadruple salchow – in the free skating on Monday.

Zhang Dan fell on the ice and hurt her knee. The program was interrupted for two minutes, but they decided to continue. Finally, they took the silver ahead of teammates Shen Xue and Zhao Hongbo.

"I felt my mind went blank when she fell on the ice, but we did not want to give up," Zhang Hao said.

However, some opponents say that two Zhangs earned the medal because the judges felt sorry for them. An official from the International Skating Union (ISU) said: "The two Zhangs halted their

# China stalks gold in Turin



China's team competes during the Ladies' Team Pursuit speed skating quarterfinals at the 2006 Winter Olympics February 15 in the Lingotto Oval, Turin.

Photo by IC



Chinese pair Zhang Dan and Zhang Hao perform in the Pairs Short Program during the Figure skating competition at the 2006 Winter Olympics, February 11 at Palavela ice rink in Turin.

Photo by IC

skating for more than one minute. According to the regulations, skaters can go on if the halt time doesn't go beyond two minutes."

They teamed up at the end of 1997 when Zhang Dan was 12 and Zhang Hao was 13. The young duo won the title at the World Junior Grand Prix Beijing leg in 1998. They made an unimpressive debut at the Salt Lake City Games where they finished 11th among 20 skaters.

Zhang Dan is slim and delicate. Zhang Hao is tall and muscular. Fans make fun of their differences and call them 'Beauty and Beast'.

"It is unfair to call him 'beast'. He is kind and handsome. He takes good care of me," said Zhang Dan. "Once I was sick, he took me to hospital and fed me medicine. He looks after me just like my mom."

The bronze medal was taken by another Chinese figure skating pair Shen Xue and Zhao Hongbo, who overcame his Achilles tendon injury to snatch the medal.

"We did our best," said the 32-year-old Zhao after the competition. "I haven't thought about retirement. Now, what I want to do is to give my poor tendon a break. The injury hasn't fully recovered."

At the 2002 Winter Games, the pair tried the throw quadruple salchows, but Shen failed to land properly, a mistake that left them in third place.

### Gold hopes: Speed skating, free style aerials and biathlon

China fields a delegation of 151 members, of which 76 are athletes who will enter nine of the 17 sports at the February 10 to 26 event in Turin.

After missing the chance to defend her title, Yang Yang, who was awarded the first-ever Winter Olympic gold medal for China in 2002, will likely compete in the women's 1,000-meter

and 1,500-meter, where gold hopes are pinned. The relay may also prove fruitful, as it features Yang, Wang Meng and Fu Tianyu.

In the men's team, 22-year old Yu Fengtong, the world short track speed skating champion (2004-2005), is seeking his first gold medal in 500-meter speed skating.

China is aiming for a Winter Olympic gold medal in snow sports for the first time. "We hope to achieve better results in snow events, especially in free style skiing aerials and biathlon," said Xiao Tian, Deputy Chef-de-Mission of the Chinese delegation for the Turin Winter Olympics.

Women's freestyle aerials, led by the aerials world champion Li Nina and the 1998 winter Olympic silver medalist Xu Nannan, the women's team undoubtedly shoulders the responsibility of the medal task from February 19 to 22.

Since both of the other two young skiers Guo Xinxin and Zhang Xin have stepped on the podium at the World Cup series, the team is ready to make history.

Besides the freestyle aerials event, China also hopes for better results in the biathlon.

With Chinese athletes reaching the top three positions at last season's world cup series and 2005 Biathlon World Championships, China is now more confident in this event.

Pan Lei, who claimed silver at last year's Universiade, and Sun Zhifeng, 14, the youngest athlete in the Chinese team, will make their Olympic debuts in Turin.

Wang Yitao, secretary general of the Chinese team, said China is still weak in some snow events like snowboarding, ski jumping, Alpine skiing and cross country skiing.

# Miserable peacocks finally find new home

## Local residents adopt peacocks

By Annie Wei

Since last month, over 160 peacocks in the peacock garden have become the concern of Beijing people after knowing that they were left without any care or food. Even worse, the owner tried to sell peacock meat to make up for his loss.

"I have been reading what happened to the peacocks, and I think it a good thing to adopt some," said one buyer surnamed Zhang Tuesday.

Each peacock was 600 yuan. Buyers could go into the peacock garden to pick one they liked. Meanwhile, three workers from Haidian animal epidemic prevention administration bureaus were responsible for registering the peacocks and signing papers to prove the peacocks in good condition.

A tourism garden in Shunyi District Monday bought 65 peacocks at 500 yuan each. But the guy, with surname Lu refused to give address of his tourism garden, just said it was under the construction.

The peacock garden in the Fragrant Hills was built in collaboration with a businessman surnamed Xiao from Zhejiang Province six years ago. "Excuse me, I want to buy four peacocks, and how much is that?" "Please save three peacocks for me!"

On Tuesday afternoon, the remaining peacocks in the park finally all found their new shelters through purchase or adoption by local residents.

### Misery: four peacocks killed by their owner

Last Friday morning, Xiao, owner of the peacock garden, killed four peacocks and hung them in front of the peacock garden, with a note saying "50 yuan per jin (500 grams) for peacock meat



The four killed peacocks hung on the gate

Photo by Heathcliff Huang

and 200 yuan for peacock heart or liver".

This bloody scene brought tears from young children who visited the Fragrance Hills, as well as the anger of public. The park asked the caretaker to take down the dead peacocks, and reported his behavior to the authorities.

The epidemic prevention department said it is illegal to kill birds now because of bird-flu concerns. The Fragrant Hills had to arrange guards to keep an eye on the peacock garden from 6 am to 6 pm, to avoid the killing of more peacocks.

The next day, Xiao admitted that he was overwhelmed by his financial troubles and apologized to the public, calling on organizations and individuals to adopt the rest peacocks.

However, Lu Di, from China Small Animal Protection Association showed great concern for the

safety of peacocks being bought. She said that China still has no complete laws to prevent animals from being hurt or abused. "The peacocks are not the only animal abuse case. Although more and more people care about animal welfare, there are no rules to deal with them."

Lu hopes that authorities can create laws to protect animals in China.

### Helping hands for the peacocks

Wang Xiaoli, owner of Jingyuan eco-garden in Shunyi District bought 11 pairs of peacocks. This week, she is busy building a nest for the peacocks in her eco-garden. Wang said she read the article about the peacocks from local newspaper, and thought her garden could provide nice surrounding as peacocks' new home.

Wang's eco-garden has plenty of corn, beans, and sweet potatoes.

"I understand the public's concerns about them. In our garden, we have professional caretakers, and we provide periodic cleaning and epidemic prevention. I guarantee that peacocks will be taken good care of here," Wang said.

Wang also mentioned that local Public Security Bureau had visited her place, to make sure the peacocks are being taken good care of.

Maybe some people wonder whether the peacocks can get used to the new surroundings. But experts say that peacocks do not require complicated things. Food for them is cheap and each peacock requires only around 100 yuan worth of corn per year and they like cabbage.

Mr. Zhang from the bird department of Beijing Zoo said that people raising peacocks should provide suitable shelter. "If the peacocks were born in Beijing, they will be used to the winter. If not, they need wind-proof living spaces in cold days."

### Timeline:

Six years ago, the agreement between the park and Xiao said that Xiao was responsible for their daily care and feeding, and the park would provide money and supervise Xiao's work. By the end of the contract, the park informed Xiao that they were not going to extend the contract to keep the peacock garden. The peacock garden's business was getting worse and worse. Xiao not only lost money in the peacock business, but also found it "impossible" to take the peacocks away from Beijing, because "animal transportation is getting stricter and I did not have the relevant paper work for breeding peacocks in Beijing."

On January 12, over 160 peacocks were left with no care or food for a week and one peacock died of starvation.

On January 13, a local report about the peacocks brought many visitors to the park with food and water.

On January 24, as the water was frozen, peacocks could not drink any water and refused to eat.

On February 6, the owner of the peacocks asked for local people's help to provide a new home for the peacocks.

On February 10, the owner killed four peacocks and tried to sell the meat.

On February 14, new owners took all peacocks in the Fragrant Hills away.



# Crackdown on pollution

## Closed plants reform to meet standards

By Qiu Jiaoning / Han Manman

The State Council Wednesday unveiled a wide-ranging plan to combat pollution, including plans to clean up heavily polluted regions and cities, and to reverse the degradation of water, air and soil quality there by the end of 2010. The plan will be extended nationwide by 2020.

The drive to clean up the environment has been drawing more attention since last November's benzene spill in the Songhua River. The State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) has pledged tighter regulation and tougher punishments in an effort to curb pollution. Last week, SEPA ordered 11 heavily polluting factories to clean up or face closure or fines, in the follow up to a nationwide investigation.

### Polluters

*Beijing Today* contacted the 11 petrochemical factories named, reaching six of them. Our inquiries revealed that most of the polluted factories are taking active steps to reduce pollution with the help of their local environmental protection agencies. However, they face a dilemma of funding shortfalls, technological difficulties and are dealing with the legacy of historical problems.

The 11 factories named include a chemical plant in Liaoning Province that has been polluting the drinking water supply of the city of Liaoyang for almost 60 years.

Jiao Hongchun, a senior engineer, said that residents, who include their own workers, living near the plant have been troubled by pollution problems. Jiao said that all factory staff are making efforts to reduce pollution but the overall plan was handicapped by capital shortages and problems left over by history.

### Capital lacking

Elsewhere, an official surnamed Kang from Lanzhou Environmental Protection Bureau said on Wednesday that a specific plan to combat pollution would be launched soon once the bureau completed a thorough investigation of the local polluting factory named in the national investigation. In fact, the company had drafted an environmental protection plan last year, but lack of money stymied reform, Kang said.

Mr. Zhao, of the Jinan Environmental Protection Bureau said, "Jinan Yuxing Import and Export is facing two problems now. One is technological, which is a problem for the whole industry. The other is a lack of capital". He noted that the bureau is trying to apply for project capital from the government.

### Losses

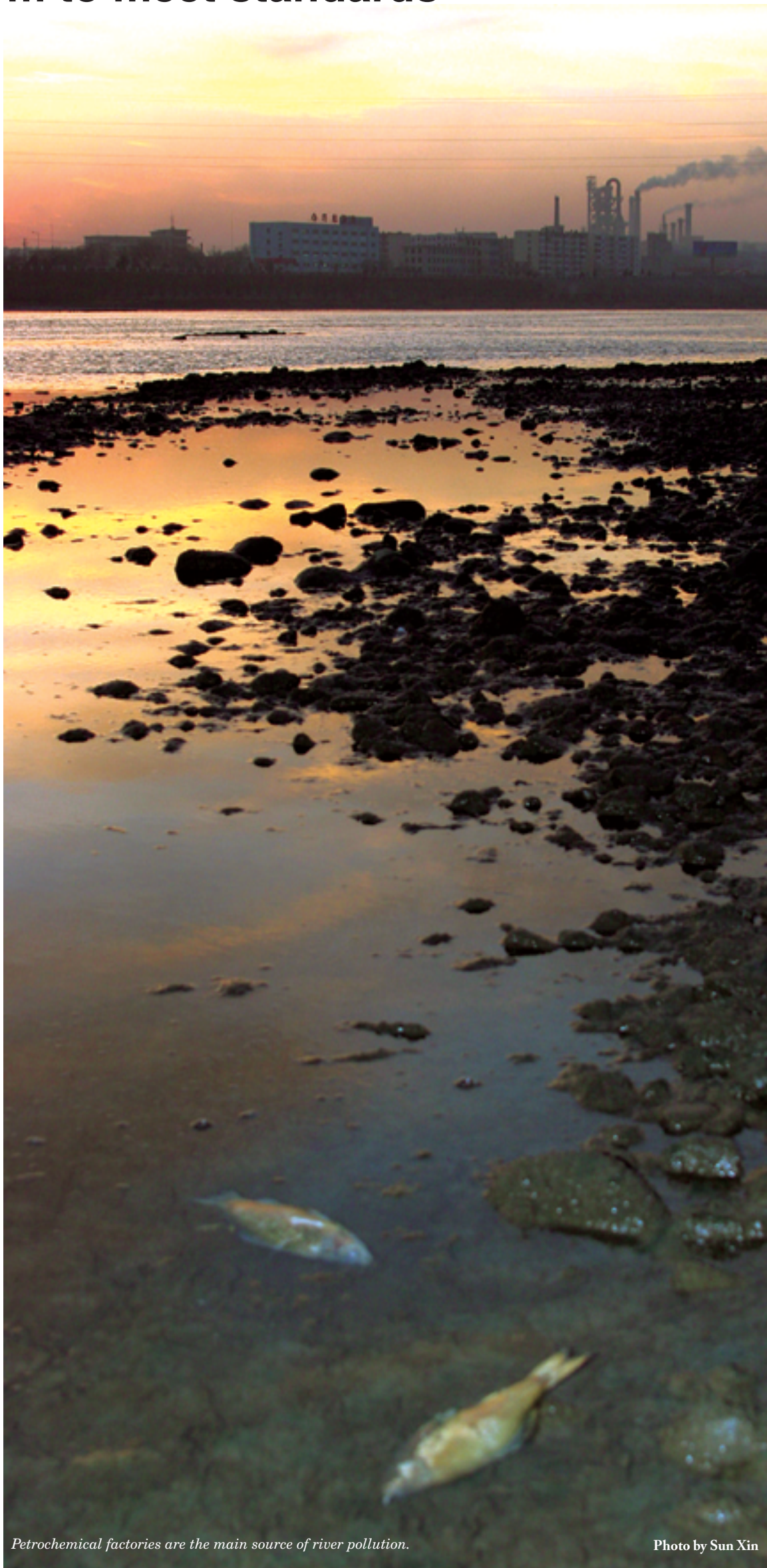
Mr. Si from Tongling Environmental Protection Bureau said that their latest reform scheme has already been reported to the provincial government. If approved, the report will be then handed up to SEPA. Their local named polluter, Annada Company, could then restart operations after three month if they pass a SEPA inspection.

According to Jiang Xinhai, the manager of Annada, their project which fell short of government standards was immediately stopped when the company received notice. This has meant daily losses of over 50,000 yuan.

According to Zhuzhou Environmental Protection Bureau, Zhuzhou Chemical Industry Group (ZCIG) is actively working to reorganize its operations. The bureau said a reorganization plan has already been submitted to SEPA and ZCIG is now working all out to meet required standards.

### Complaints

"It is not an objective evaluation. SEPA has not given a correct view of Hoton," a director from Guangzhou Hoton Chemical Group said. He added, "We meet nearly all of the SEPA standards and everybody who visits our company says Hoton not only has beautiful surroundings but also owns good quality equipment." He noted that the company is has been assessed by Guangzhou Environmental Protection Bureau as one also one of the province's companies with the best environmental protection.



Petrochemical factories are the main source of river pollution.

Photo by Sun Xin



All-night clubbing will become a thing of the past

Photo by He Yi

## Time's up for late-late nightlife

By Annie Wei

A new regulation tightening control on entertainment venues in China was published this week and will come into effect next month. The regulations appeared mainly aimed at cutting down on illegal activities at entertainment venues, especially karaoke clubs and discos notorious for their association with drugs and prostitution.

One new rule in particular, stipulating that entertainment venues should be closed between 2 to 8 in the morning, will depress late-night revelers. This is the first time that regulations of this nature have been approved by the State Council. Previously, local authorities – Beijing tried in 2001 – passed rules saying that entertainment venues should not open after 2 am, but business owners could apply for extensions. KTV parlours and discos like Banana in Jianguomen, Mix and Vics by the north gate of the Worker's Stadium have long been famous for their late-night crowds.

### Foreign workers

The new regulations also require foreigners working at entertainment venues to have work permits. Although the same requirements were included in previous regulations issued in 1999, in recent years many new clubs have hired foreign bands and part-time foreign DJs, many without permits, as a way of attracting custom. The existing regulations did not seem to effect this at all.

Many young clubbers we spoke to in the past week said that they have heard of the new rules. Guan Yadi, a young man working in film wondered, "Will this mean that we have nowhere to go after 2 am?"

### Killer killed

Party and Melody, the leading karaoke club chains, said that new regulations would affect their business, but not too seriously. They are working on new schedules and fee scales that will be in line with the new regulations, which take effect March 1.

Young students say it's a pity because the 2 to 8 am period has the lowest fees and was the only time they could afford to go out.

In a bar near to the Poly Theatre, private rooms are available for friends or strangers to get together to play a game called 'killer', currently extremely popular among young Chinese office workers. Bar staff said their business hours were 8 pm to 8 am, and that they have not yet heard of the regulations nor of any changes their management were planning to comply with the new rules.

"If we cannot open between 2 am to 8am, it will mean we are going to have to close down altogether," a young woman working at the bar said.

### Bars

Cho Chonggee, owner of a bar that has a DJ playing at night, said that if regulations definition of entertainment venues included bars like his, it would certainly affect his business.

"General speaking, very few people stay out after 2 am in the small hours," Cho said, "business after 2 am does not bring enough profit to make late opening cost-effective, but it's part of the concept of a bar to make people feel at home and to let them stay as long as they want."

Some foreign customers in a Houshai club were concerned by the regulations. "Normal people do not go out after 2 am all the time. But it would be sad if we could not do that any more," William Brock, a 30-something Australian, said.

### Exemptions

The Ministry of Culture, the government body in charge of setting the rules, gave a definition of what it meant by 'entertainment venues' in a 2001 notice. In those, entertainment venues were taken to mean KTVs, discos, nightclubs, and computer gaming venues.

"Bars, teahouses, restaurants and coffee shops frequented by foreigners in the late evening do not fall within the scope of our definition of entertainment venues," a spokesperson for the Ministry of Culture said.

"Performances in above sites do not have to follow the new regulations on entertainment venues, just the existing regulations on performances," she said.

## Airline refuses to carry injured girl

By Jackie Zhang

The father of a 14-year-old girl who lost her foot in a traffic accident is to sue Hainan Airlines because the girl, Pi Nana, was not allowed on their plane to fly to an urgent operation last month.

Pi Nana's right foot was severed in a traffic accident last month. In order to undergo emergency surgery to reattach her foot, Pi Nana's parents bought airline tickets intending to take her to Lanzhou. However, staff at Hainan Airlines refused to let Pi Nana board her scheduled flight. When Pi Nana eventually arrived in Lanzhou by ambulance, the operation ended with her losing her right foot.

### Delay

The surgeon overseeing Pi Nana's treatment said that even she had reached the hospital earlier the possibility of reattaching her foot was small due to the seriousness of her injuries. However, Pi Nana's father Pi Ruiyi believes that the airline company should be held responsible for the delay.

"It is because of Hainan Airline's refusal to take her that my daughter arrived at the hospital late, which resulted in her right foot being amputated," said Pi Ruiyi, "We had made my daughter's condition clear at the time we bought the ticket. But when we arrived at the airport, staff there claimed that my daughter was seriously ill and not eligible to fly. The plane took off at least five minutes earlier than scheduled. Nobody later came



Pi Nana in hospital

Photo by Zhu Jingyuan

to help us. Hainan Airlines have so far refused to take any responsibility for this."

### Response

This Tuesday, Hainan Airlines issued a statement of the reasons why they refused to carry Pi Nana. They said that the type of aircraft Pi Nana was due to board could not allow stretchers to be in the passenger compartment as they would block gangways and make it dangerous for other passengers. The airline asserted their right according to regulations to refuse to accept passengers ineligible to fly.

"Pi Nana was not using a stretcher at that time,"

said Zhang Qihuai, the lawyer representing the Pi's family, "The girl's injury was to her foot. She could sit on the plane with her injured foot bandaged. Pi Nana's parents had indeed shown the ticket seller the hospital's certification that the girl urgently needed to fly for an operation. Also, there were a doctor and nurse accompanying the girl. The airline company had no reason to refuse them."

Zhang said that in fact the airline company had several other options to resolve the problem, such as negotiating with other passengers to give the girl more room on the plane, asking other airlines for help and or sending another plane to carry her. "The airline company did not try other methods to help the girl but just refuse her flat out. It was irresponsible," Zhang said.

### Investigation

Yesterday, Zhang Qihuai traveled to Lanzhou for the investigation of this case. "We are accusing the airline company of a breach of faith, since they sold Pi airline tickets but refused to let the girl board her plane. I'm convinced that Pi can get compensation from the airline."

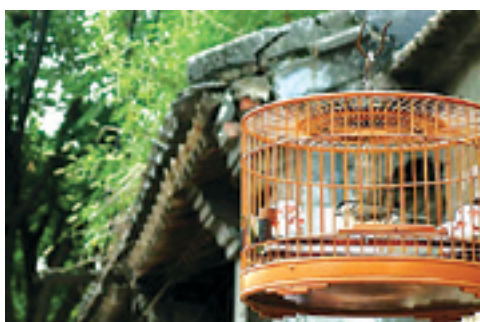
*Beijing Today* tried to contact Hainan Airlines this Wednesday to hear their side of this story. However, staff who answered our call claimed that the responsible person was out of the office and declined to make any comment.





Some of the pictures taken by Old Beijing members.

## Recording a vanishing Beijing



By Jackie Zhang

A photographic record of Beijing's lanes is being compiled by a group of enthusiasts who wish to preserve some of the city's history before it is destroyed in the run up to the Olympics.

The group members are all members of the website *Old Beijing*. "Lanes house the typical buildings in Beijing and represent the history of the old city," said Zhang Wei, the manager of *Old Beijing*, "They reflect the social evolution and cultural background at that time."

Time is against the group, and they must work fast. "We are trying our best to take as many photos of the lanes as possible before they are torn down because we want to keep the images of these historical buildings in people's memories," said Zhang.

This Tuesday, the group went to the

Dashanlan area, which is to the east of Qianmen. "The lanes here are to be torn down and quadrangles in an ancient style will be built," said Zhang Wei.

The group not only takes photos of the lanes, but also enters each yard and visits the residents.

At the front of some yards, old men sit together, chatting. Most of them were over 70 years old. When they discover that the young men are taking pictures of these old lanes, they agree that keeping records of these lanes is necessary.

"There are people come to take pictures these days," said an old man, "You'd better take photos as soon as possible since these lanes may no longer exist in the near future."

"So far, we have already taken photos of around 730 lanes in Beijing, out of which 300 lanes are being shot in detail," said Zhang

Jinsheng, a member of the group.

"Almost everyday, some members come out to take pictures of different lanes. But every Sunday, all the group members will gather together to take photos," Zhang Wei said.

"When more members are participating, we have more time and people to take detailed photos. For example, some people who know more about architecture will enter the yards to see the construction style of the houses; some people who know more about Beijing culture will talk with the residents and try to dig out the history of the yards," said Zhang Jinsheng,

"At the end of this year, we'll put these photos on our website," said Zhang Wei, "We hope that people can know more about Beijing lanes through these pictures, and also future generations can know about lanes and the old Beijing culture when they are gone."

## Online ID check targets swindlers

By Han Manman

Citizens in Beijing concerned that they are being swindled by someone using a false ID card can now verify a person's identity from Monday using a new ID number checking system.

Citizens can visit the website of the National Citizen Identify Information Center (NCIIC), [www.nciic.com.cn](http://www.nciic.com.cn), or send a cell phone short message (China Mobile users send to 10695110 and China Unicom users send to 9951) to verify the person's name and ID number in the database.

If the information on the ID card matches that in the database, you will receive a feedback including the word match and a password. Citizens could then use the password to log on the [sms.id5.cn](http://sms.id5.cn) to confirm the ID card holder's picture. Five yuan is charged for each inquiry.

If the inquiry is unsuccessful or either the name or the ID number does not match that in the database, you will receive a short message saying 'no match', and the inquirer will not be charged.

The service is now available in a few locations including Beijing and Shanghai, but will soon be available in most cities in China.

According to Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, over 90 percent swindlers are using false ID cards to commit crime, and people also hide their true identities for irregular purposes.



Photo by Guo Yongyan

## History through clothes

By Xie Lixue

A photographic exhibition on changes in Chinese fashion is on show at the China National Museum of Fine Arts, and runs until next Wednesday.

Three hundred photos in five categories are on display – the everyday, the ethnic, the fashionable, the digital, and the international. Shao Hua, the chairman of China Photographers Association, said: "The exhibition displays historical changes in China by looking at what people wear. From those pictures, either taken by professional photographers or amateurs, we see the development of our clothes culture – now the young show their individuality and the elderly are happy to try on a white wedding dress. It reflects the improvements in our country."

The displays range from black and white right up to the latest colorful digital pictures. One is entitled *Looking Back at 20 Years* by Tong Dong. His exhibit consists of 20 pictures that were taken at Beihai Park on the first day of every year. The figures in the pictures are his wife and two daughters.

From the first picture featuring handmade cotton-padded clothes to the last one with featuring his wife wearing a long woolen skirt and his grown-up daughters in stylish leather coats, he illustrated how time had transformed the people and country.

The bright and unique costumes of various minority nationalities drew much attention. One collection by Qiao Qiming focused on a foreign man who happily modeled costumes from the Miao minority. Others showed the traditional tailoring equipment and techniques of the Miao, the precious jewelry of Tibet, and beautiful headwear of the Yi.

Possibly the most interesting section is the digital. *The Dream of Butterfly* by Guo Sanxing features a beautiful woman surrounded by many gorgeous butterflies, with one peacefully resting on her forehead. In the hall, many young people stood before it to discuss how this effect was created.

Wang Congmin won the first prize for his *The Generation of the Dragon*. Using the Great Wall as a background, each of the figures is wearing a shirt or Chinese style top with diverse dragon patterns.

## Director annoyed by spoof

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Following the disappointment of not seeing his movie, *The Promise*, make it to the Oscars, director Chen Kaige is furious at a comic spoof of the film released on the internet.

A few weeks after the movie hit the cinemas, a young man in Shanghai created *A murder caused by a steamed bun* and the program, which became popular online.

Hu Ge, a former DJ and amateur video maker in Shanghai, edited the scenes, dubbed the movie with funny lines and made it into a 20-minute spoof TV crime report.

"How can someone be so shameless!" said Chen Kaige while attending the Berlin Film Festival with his beloved film.

In the new story, the characters all become policemen, people working in an entertainment venue, or criminals. The new plot is a cat-and-mouse story. Instead of the original soundtrack, the spoof features music from pop to rap to Chinese folk songs. Hu even inserted two commercial breaks between each section.

The video, according to Hu, was only meant to be shown to his friends, but someone put it online and it soon spread. Viewers responded well and some even claimed that because of the online adaptation they decided to see the original film in the cinema.

But Chen Kaige didn't see

the funny side. Yang Dandan, manager of Chen's 21st Century Shengkai Film Company, confirmed that they had sent lawyer's letters to two websites that had publicized the video. Chen accused the two websites of violating the copyright of *The Promise*.

Hu has not received a court summons yet. He was surprised by what he described as an "over-reaction." "I made this video just for fun and to practice my video editing skills. I never meant to offend Mr. Chen or his film. To defend this case would be quite a financial problem for me." He apologized to Chen, but denied any copyright violation.

The online response was not very sympathetic towards Chen. "Hu's creation actually promoted *The Promise*. Chen should have enough of a sense of humor to enjoy this adaptation," wrote one blogger. Another blogger pointed out that Chen's over-reaction towards Hu reflected his frustration at poor sales in North America.

Wang Ziqiang, the spokesman of the National Copyright Administration of China, said, "It is legal to quote a small amount of others' works for an introduction or to support a certain argument. However, if it is not for an introduction or argument, and the quotation has surpasses certain limitations, it may violate copyright law."



A scene from the spoof version of *The Promise*

## Women-only carriages cancelled on trains

The 'women-only carriages' on two direct trains between Beijing and Shanghai have been cancelled after only nine days of service due to a lack of interest.

Tickets for the 'women-only carriages' will be sold to male travelers as normal, announced sources from Tianjin Railway Station (southeast of Beijing).

Tianjin Railway Station booking clerks said that no tickets for the special car-

riages were sold, even on the first day.

Two special sleeping carriages with eight cushioned berths were allocated for female passengers on each of the trains to create a more comfortable and private space for female travelers.

Some female passengers had complained that they felt embarrassed by the presence of male travelers in closed sleeping carriages with cushioned berths. (Xinhua)



Photo by chinafotopress

## Tree cleaners

By Annie Wei

600 volunteers from different government bodies of Chaoyang District started collecting plastics bags hanging in the trees yesterday with special tools: a four-meter long aluminum stick and a hook. According to environmental bureau's figures, China consumes two billion plastic bags everyday. A better way to protect the environment and reduce the 'white trash' on the trees is to use recycling paper or cloth bags, experts say.



# Life is like a box of chocolates for Paul Coleman

## UK 'Earth Worker' promotes environmental protection in Beijing



Mr Paul Coleman on his way to Tianjin from the Temple of Heaven

By Han Manman

With several volunteers following him, 'Earth Walker' Paul Coleman made his way to Tianjin on Saturday after he walked for 21 days across half of Beijing. Born in the UK, Paul has walked across 37 countries in 15 years, planting trees to promote environmental protection along the way.

He wears a red scarf with a symbol on it. Paul said the character in Japanese means 'the endless power', and in Chinese it means 'money' to show he needs support. "By doing this people will recognize me easily. Then they will be eager to know what I am doing, and I can't tell them about my mission," Paul said.

Paul and Konomi, his Japanese wife, started their first Chinese journey at the Great Wall (Badaling) on January 15. Walking across the mainly rural areas of Beijing, Paul has a deep understanding of the importance of environmental protection in the outskirts of the city. He said that the walk led him through the poorer districts, which he describes as being back in ages way behind as compared to the modern, thriving cities. He found that the garbage was dumped haphazardly, and a lot of it finds its way into the watercourses.

He wrote in his diary: 'Days ago we walked through a heavily polluted region near Beijing where the local waterways were full of garbage and stank of human and animal feces. We noted this region produces a lot of vegetables in green houses and they must draw their water

from somewhere. My guess is the water comes from the local waterways. But even worse, we saw a huge open garbage dump and two local shepherds allowing their sheep to feed and drink from the garbage dump. It is necessary to avoid these actions because people eventually end up eating these sheep and with them all the poison contained in the garbage.'

He said that the air pollution worsened as he got nearer to the downtown area. "The air is pervaded by a smell of soot, which makes me recall my childhood in Manchester," said Paul.

"China is really big, and the government cannot cover all areas. If a problem happens, the first thing is to let everybody know about it. I think this is halfway to solving the problem," said Paul, adding, "My duty is to help people to have a deep understanding about environmental protection and raise their will to make the change." He said that Beijing citizens have a better sense of environmental protection than their rural neighbors, but they need to put words into actions.

The traveler confessed that sometimes he gets really tired because he walks for days on end. However, he is really enjoying a journey filled with interesting and unforgettable experiences, like being suspected of being a spy and arrested six times within two days and nearly being killed in Sarajevo, and like meeting his beautiful wife in Japan.

"Do you remember the scene in *Forrest Gump* when he is running across the desert, and lots of people were

behind him? When I saw that movie, I couldn't help laughing. When I was in Mexico, years before the movie, I walked across the desert. Behind me were about 50 people. When I look back, I can't believe so many people were walking behind me across the desert," Paul said, adding that people often called him a real-life Forrest Gump.

Recalling his Beijing journey, Paul said people were very hospitable. In Fangshan district on the outskirts of Beijing, he was invited to enjoy a traditional Spring Festival with a local family. He said firmly "I will be back in 2008. I want to help China to achieve a green Olympics," Paul said, adding, "I am a good spokesperson; I travel the planet and met a lot of people. I will tell them what is happening in China".

Global Village of Beijing, the NGO organization that is supporting Paul on this Beijing journey, said that although Paul only planted two trees in Beijing due to the cold weather, his ideas influenced many local people not only by seeing his actions, but also through the media.

Paul began his walk in 1990. Thanks to his endeavors, over six million trees have already been planted. Paul will take a ferry from Tianjin to Korea to go on the Earth Day Friendship Walk, continuing his tree-planting journey through Beijing - Seoul and Tokyo from January to April 2006. At the end of this year or early next year, he will go to Africa to continue his walk. He said his mission is to plant at least one hundred million trees with volunteers before 2010.

### Community

## Doing something for the environment?

By Tom Mackenzie

Do you do your bit for the environment? The government is cracking down on polluting companies and there is a drive to clean up Beijing before the 2008 Olympic Games. But what are individuals doing to help cut down on pollution and waste?

Do you recycle, re-use shopping bags, or take a bike instead of a taxi? Or do you think that's all just a waste of time and energy?

**Aurelie Palancher, France**

I wish I had the means to recycle more often but it doesn't seem to be considered that important in China so it's pretty impossible.

**Carlos Santamaria, Spain**

I really don't care much about protecting the environment - if I start recycling it won't change corporate policies on dumping waste into oceans and rivers.

**Steffi Schau, Germany**

I try to do small things to help the environment, like re-using plastic bags and cycling instead of driving.

**Raphael Beaugrand, France**

Protecting the environment has always been of great importance to me. When I have enough money I'm going to buy an electric bicycle - they are fun and they don't pollute.

**Mark Binnersley, UK**

I would like to recycle but there's no information for foreigners on how to go about it.

**Joe Magliaro, US**

I asked my landlord if there was a way to recycle some of my waste but he said no. It just doesn't seem to be a priority in Beijing.

## International volunteers to protect China's environment



Ikeda Takeshi telling Beijing residents about 'The Dragon Recycling Project'.

By Han Manman

Serving as a consultant to the Beijing Olympic Committee and part of the creation of the 'Green Olympics', environmental protection association The Global Village of Beijing (GVB) is trying to raise public awareness about environmental problems in China.

Among over 1,000 volunteers in GVB, there are also two full time and 21 part time international volunteers. Their work varies from constant interaction with international organizations to environmental protection projects.

Japanese volunteer Ikeda Takeshi said he loves the GVB work. "I always wanted to work in the field of environmental protection. I was originally working in a Japanese company in Beijing, but I wasn't interested in the work at all. Then one day I went to participate in a community activity organized by GVB, and this is how I got to know the people in the organization,"

Takeshi said, adding, "One month later, I quit the job and joined GVB last year. Having this great opportunity to work on the environment has been fantastic."

He is working on a project called 'The Dragon Recycling Project', which aims to raise public awareness of the negative impact on the environment caused by irresponsible disposal of waste ink cartridges and computer hardware, and encourages the public to participate in the recycling process.

"What we do is tell people in the communities, schools, companies or on the streets how great an impact the waste computer hardware and ink cartridges have on the environment. We then place a 'recycling bin' in their office and tell them to bring the waste cartridges and drop them into the bin," Takeshi said, adding, "Through the project, we came to realize the great damage 'e-waste' (waste electronic and electrical equipment) is causing both to humans and the environment, especially in China, which receives 70 percent of the e-waste from all over the world."

Another volunteer, Benjamin Combes from France, said that he was recruited a few months ago to help implement an eco-tourism project in China. He said, "My job is basically to find technical aid from overseas and help local communities and agencies develop sustainable tourism here, which is very new for China NGOs," adding, "That makes me feel I am not just a GVB member, but also a global awareness movement member".

Founded in 1996 as one of the first NGOs in China, Global Village of Beijing (GVB) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization working in the field of environmental education and awareness.

To become a volunteer for GVB, fill up the volunteer registration form provided on the GVB website.

<http://www.gvbchina.org.cn/zhichi/zhizhuanzhi.php> Chinese

<http://www.gvbchina.org/EnglishWeb/Volunteers.htm> English

### BJ's LOVE & HATE

#### Honk

**if you love having a car in Beijing, honk twice if you hate it!**

By Christopher Parsons

Regardless of the pros and cons of having a car in Beijing, 70 percent of all Beijing families plan to get one within the next five years. I am preparing to hate the thicker traffic. HONK, HONK!

However, as a car owner I can't really complain. Having a car keeps me and my family safe. HONK! We all know the 'sins of Beijing cabbies' (see my humorous article 'the seven deadly sins of the Beijing cabbie' for more info and laughs) When you own a car you can wear seatbelts, (what a luxury!) put kids in child safety seats (there's an idea!) and even breathe non-smoke drenched air. (I wonder what that is like?) I love having my own car. HONK!

I hate how quickly the meniscus of filth covers my car, HONK, HONK! but I love the inexpensive rag wavers that are eager to wash my car with a smile. HONK!

I hate that the road rules change without warning, HONK, HONK, and that the authorities are always ready to give out tickets for turning left where it was legal to do so just one day before. HONK, HONK.

But I love the slack given all foreigners behind the wheel - especially when we forget how to speak Chinese. (*Wo ting bu dong!*)

I used to hate my friend pulling the hand break while at stoplights. Anywhere else that would be dangerous, but in Beijing's traffic I realized it is a necessity or you will end up with one gigantic calf muscle on one leg and a small calf muscle on the other. No one wants to walk like Quasimodo!

I love the cute names for the cars in Beijing HONK! - the mouse mouse, QQ, BENZ che, walwo and so on. I love the Santana the most! HONK, HONK, HONK! (That is me who says YES "I love it" times) As a fan of famed guitarist Carlos Santana, I can't help but sing one of his songs every time I see the word Santana!

"She's a black magic woman...! (Insert Latin themed ripping guitar solo here!)

I hate that the only personal expressions on cars in Beijing are 'new driver' signs and graffiti thumbed in the dirty windshield. (Don't kiss me) HONK, HONK!

I love that there is still a chance to start my own bumper sticker company. HONK!

Here are some bumper stickers ideas: (feel free to love or hate them)

Spit happens!

Bao bao on board (baby on board)

For the front bumper

Lao Wai Lai Le (foreigner cometh)

Back bumper

Lao Wai Zou Le! (foreigner goeth!)

Or the educational ministry can give out bumper stickers that tell us facts about the Olympics or English learning bumper stickers!

We all love to read while waiting in traffic jams!

Until my company gets rolling, you can imagine your own bumper stickers and keep smiling! HONK!

PS

What I hate most about cars in Beijing is ALL THAT HONKING!





Skyscrapers and residential towers are everywhere.



Replace the old with new



Migrant workers from the countryside build the buildings.



Beijing is under restructuring and reframing.

By Romain Degoul

In the past, visiting Beijing from time to time, I would always find myself astonished by the changes the city had endured over the space of just a few months. Sometimes, I couldn't even recognize a whole area. Kilometers squared of old hutong had simply been replaced by dozens of tall concrete towers...

Today, living in Beijing, I am still impressed by the rapidity of the city's remodelling. It seems to grow so fast here, especially with the Games approaching.

Migrant workers are everywhere, transforming and modernizing this enormous capital over the next three years.

A few weeks ago, I was walking through Sanlitun, past the site 'The New Sanlitun'. In the centre of a huge hole, old buildings stood, waiting to be destroyed. Returning two days later, I discovered that they had already disappeared...

The next morning, construction workers were destroying the street at the corner of my building. I immediately thought that this would take several months to rebuild - as it may do in France - but it took only seven days! Seven days ...I still cannot believe it.

Some people used to say that Beijing couldn't possibly be ready for the Olympic Games: I bet it will be!

I began taking photographs as a hobby when I was 15. It was only after graduating in business law and taking a long trip to Africa that I decided to follow a career in photography.

My love of freedom and for travel, my curiosity towards this world and my strong will to try to understand it better, led me to make this choice.

Presently, I work for the French press agency REA, which sells my works to various renowned European newspapers and magazines.

— Romain Degoul, Photographer, French, 28

This page is looking for free-lance photographers.

Experience and professionalism are not a must. We want your own perspective and views about Beijing.

Have works that may interest us? Contact: lens@ynet.com, or call: 6590 2520.



They destroyed and rebuilt the street at the corner of my building in seven days!



Bicycles can move quickly.



A new Beijing is emerging out of the construction sites.



By Shelley Xie

At a time when the spring trends on the runways are knocking at the door of our wardrobes, the Oscar's red carpet show will soon bring these styles to life on the shining stars.

This will prompt competition among clothes and jewelry designers to get the stars to sport their designs. When the cameras from all over the world focus on the Kodak Theater, the long red carpet transforms into the most amazing 'catwalk' of big brands.

The red carpet time this year will be extended from 30 minutes to a full hour. "People want to see the glitz and glamour – they want to see the fashion on the red carpet!" said Sid Ganis, Academy president.

The dos and don'ts from prestigious commentators will quickly occupy the media's headlines, and it seems never to be a failure as far as fashion promotion is concerned.

So what will be the fashion on display at the Oscars, especially on best actress nominees who are just one step away from the golden statuettes? The Golden Globes are usually a good indicator of what will appear on the red carpet in March.

At the Globes – the preview for the Oscars, the stars were in white and black, sparkles and see-through. Felicity Huffman looked gorgeous in her empire-waist white gown with sparkle straps from British couture label Marchesa, who also provided her with a navy blue strapless gown for the premiere of *Transamerica*. There is a good chance she will be in another Marchesa frock on March 5.

Reese Witherspoon was in a white-and-silver Chanel dress. It seemed that she got the trend and right style for her, but the only problem was that Kirsten Dunst wore a similar dress in 2003 to a Golden Globes party. Nothing could be more embarrassing and disappointing for a star. Obviously, Reese will no longer accept anything from Chanel.

Charlize Theron opted for a sexy sheer Dior gown that looked transparent. She paired her short black dress with a vintage Cartier bracelet borrowed from a museum. As the face of Christian Dior's J'adore perfume, she will undoubtedly wear another John Galliano creation to next month's Oscars, but probably a floor-length gown instead of a short one.

Keira Knightley, impeccably dressed in a pale strapless Valentino dress with soutache front, was definitely the leader of the new generation of fashion icons. She paired the dress with vintage Cartier earrings. Doris Raymond, a vintage-couture expert said: "Her dress was fabulous; that one-tone tassel embellishment, even the purse worked; she's got her style down." Being a rising star, will she become the new target model of Valentino? We can find the answers on her new look at the Oscars.

As a harbinger of spring, celebrities embraced red, ivory and black at the Golden Globes. The style is basically minimalism with less embellishment. Oscars look set to feature more pastels and color on goddess gowns with brilliant necklines, such as halters, knotted details or lace embellishment.

The red lips on most of the runways will remind stars' makeup artists to pay attention to lip color – because too many pale lips have ruined many fabulous outfits.

Nicole Kidman, as the model for Chanel, wore the pink Karl Lagerfeld design at the 2002 Oscars and another strapless Chanel in 2004. Will she redeem the prestige of the brand? Will Gwyneth Paltrow keep the fairytale of her vision of romantic prettiness? What will the stunning Scarlett Johansson wear (who also in a Valentino dress at the Globes) to become a fashion favorite in the new generation? Find all the answers on the red carpet of the 78th Academy Awards.

# Guess what they wear on Oscar



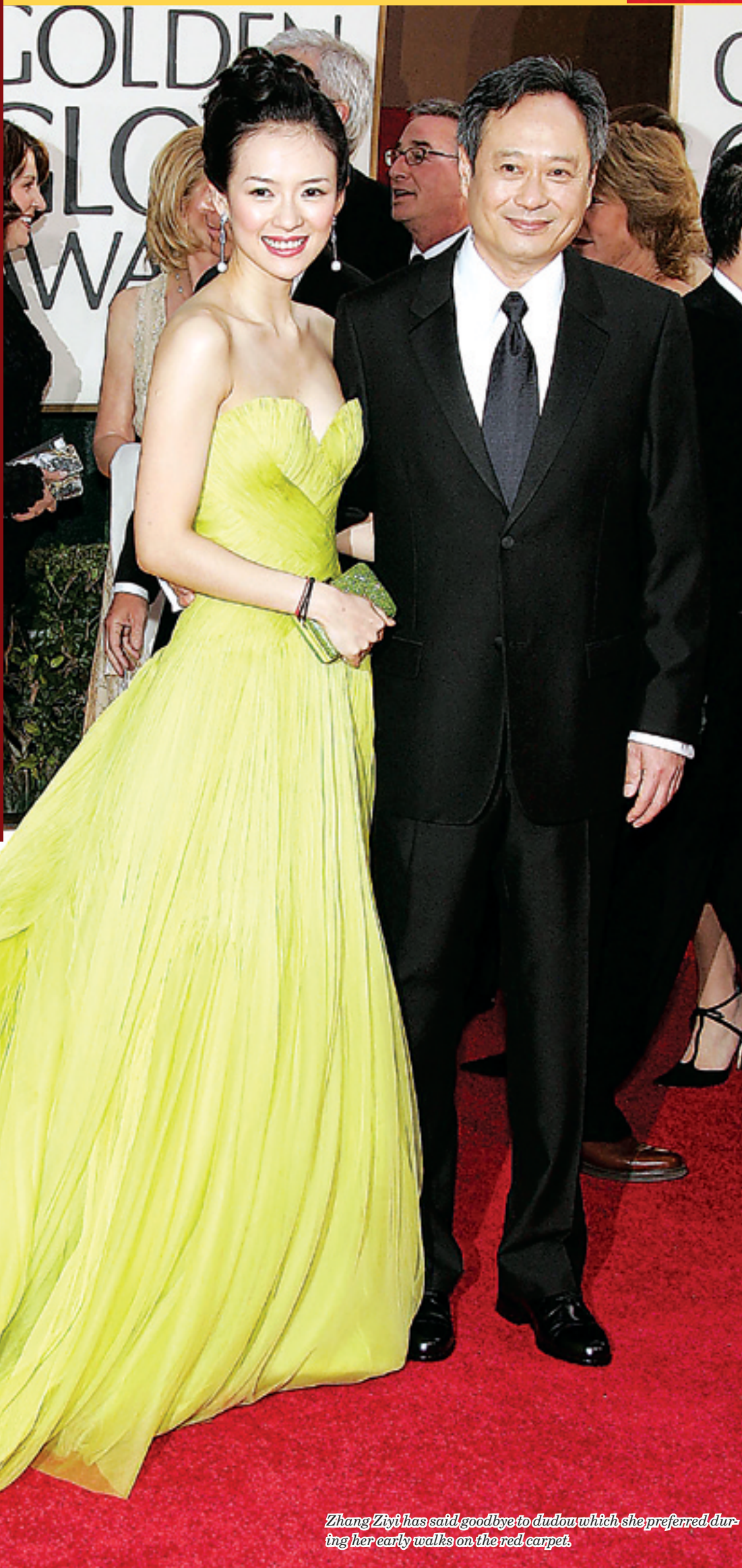
Keira Knightley



Charlize Theron



Rachel Weiss



Zhang Ziyi has said goodbye to dudou which she preferred during her early walks on the red carpet.

## Wear an Oscar to the Oscars

Spanish beauty Penelope Cruz is just one of the stars that loves the work of Oscar de la Renta. She wore a yellow strapless gown with an oversized bow at the back hem by Oscar on the red carpet of the 77th Academy Awards.

From fashionista Sarah Jessica Parker to First Lady Laura Bush, they all love Oscar's designs.

Oscar de la Renta is recognized globally as the embodiment of elegance and sophistication. His delicate, opulent designs are all made with the finest materials. Maybe his designs benefit from the artistic, painting background he had before he decided to study fashion design at the Academy of San Fernando, Madrid, Spain.

"I always think the best way to

dress is when the person notices you first and the dress after," he said to *In Business Windsor*. "I design clothes for women who want to buy them." So he not only provides opulent eveningwear and lavish coats to youthful celebrities and socialites, but also is popular with chic ladies.

Being so close to the Hollywood set in California, Oscar is an integral part of the red carpet at the Oscars. The gowns and the evening dresses become must-have items for stars to display at various events and parties.

He loves to give his dresses rich, spicy colors like deep red with fringes sequins or embroidery to decorate them like a womanly lady. He said: "Women think



America's fashion king

black is the most flattering color, but they're wrong. Pink adds a cosmetic-like radiance and warmth. Black drains the skin of color: pink delights the eye."

"It's gorgeous and comfortable," said Penelope. Chic style and colors on comfortable material – it's not hard to explain why so many elegant beauties will choose his brand for the Oscars. He also has made a name for himself by dressing many First Ladies – Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Nancy Reagan, Hillary Clinton and now Laura Bush.

We still remember the Inaugural Balls in 2005, where Laura Bush was very glamorous in the Oscar de la Renta dress that had a layer of tulle adorned with bugle beads and crystals. As one of the favorites of Mr. de la Renta, he made a matching costume

and style for this very important event.

He celebrated the 40th anniversary of the brand at last year's spring/summer 2006 collection. The Williams sisters, Eva Longoria, Candace Bushnell, and Donald and Melania Trump were agog in the front row at his clothes and accessories – flounces galore, toreder jackets, and a spicy palette of marigold, red and warm neutrals.

The brand now spans choosy stars from clothes to accessories, which includes bags, belts and shoes. And now you can find his name on cosmetic cases, furs, jewelry, lingerie, scarves, jeans, menswear and home decors. For a man that has topped the list of many Hollywood stars and US celebrities for over 50 years, he is really a designing icon in the 'Oscars of fashion'.

## Glamorous glitter



### Diamond Shoes

By Stuart Weitzman (US)

The pair of diamond-adorned shoes was worn by country star Alison Krauss who sang the Oscar-nominated songs from the movie *Cold Mountain*. They are highlighted with Kwiat Diamonds and valued at US\$2 million.



### Handbag

By Lana Marks (US)

The 'Cleopatra Clutch' with genuine jewels was in the hands of Charlize Theron when she won the best actress award. This extraordinary US\$100,000 creation, made from metallic silver alligator skin, and 1,500 fully cut and faceted black and white diamonds set in an 18 carats white gold frame.



### Butterfly Pendant

By Paula Crevoshay (US)

This gorgeous butterfly landed on the chest of Ashley Peldon. It's a one-of-a-kind precious pendant by Paula Crevoshay. It features a star rose quartz body, weighing over 50 carats, with each wing containing 108 stones.



### Earrings and Ring

By Harry Winston (US)

These sapphire earrings and ring were worn by Nicole Sheridan, one of the winners at the 2006 Golden Globes from the Best TV Series *Desperate Housewives*. The pair of 'Sapphire Drop Earrings' consists of 14 carats cushion sapphire drops and four carat sapphire tops surrounded by a total of 10 carats of diamonds.



# To protect China's spiritual land

## 2,000 kinds of national intangible treasures to go public

By Xie Xiaolin

In the first week after the Spring Festival holiday, an exhibition that collects over 2,000 kinds of Chinese intangible cultural heritages continues showcasing the country's traditional spirit.

UNESCO's Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity Proclamation, launched in May 2001, defines the intangible cultural heritage as "the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage." The specific forms are oral traditions, performing arts, music, festive events, rituals, social practices and knowledge and practices concerning nature.

China's Achievements on the Safeguard of the Intangible Culture Heritage will be in the National Museum of China till March 16. During this time, people can feel folk songs, craftsmanship, languages, and festival rituals and all the original Chinese culture, passed down by 56 nationalities, most of them now in danger of extinction.

The journey begins on the stage of Kunqu Opera (origin of Peking Opera), where hang the colorful costumes and a model of Beijing Guanghe Da Zhalou - this Peking opera theater still remains at the same site after more than 400 years.

Chinese music has a history of some 3,000 years. At the right side of the theater model is the most expensive and oldest exhibits - two *Guqin* (a seven-stringed zither, China's oldest stringed instrument) made in the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and Song Dynasty (960-1279).

Opposite *Guqin* lies a much more recent and famous installment, the steel wire recorder that recorded *Erquan Yinyue* originally played by the blind musician A Bing with the traditional *erhu* in 1950. People can enjoy the music through the modern CD player beside it.

The biggest area display shows *yunjin* silk fabricated by a giant wooden machine of 5.6 meters long, four meters high and one meter wide, transported from Nanjing, Jiangsu. Due to the complicated technological process, a product would take two or three months to finish since two workers can only finish 5 or 6 centimeters a day. In the exhibition hall, two workers cooperate presenting the last two or three weaving procedures.

According to Wang Baolin, director of Nanjing Yunjin Silk Fabrics Research Institute, the unique folk craftsmanship entered the imperial palace in Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) and now only 180 people in his institute know how it works. "We have applied for world heritage status," he said.

On the left of Yunjin fabrics, a luxury, exquisite marriage sedan has attracted many cameras. Zhaoqou, the emperor of Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), has been saved by a country girl of Ningbo. Later he lets all girls dress in beautiful clothes and be carried in a red-and-gold chair held by eight people, a traditional part of marriage ceremonies. The showcased example that weighs 200 kilograms stands three meters high, 1.5 meters long and 95 centimeters wide, and took three years to produce.

In the local hall people can see gems from different minorities, like the Tibetan artwork Tangka, traditional Tibetan paintings of Buddha. "Its color can last hundreds of years," said Nima, of the Tibetan Museum. "One of these with 31 Buddhas reflects certain motifs and devices of the composer migrated from life to art."

Ten folk artists are presenting their creative process in the local hall. A senior technician from Jingdezhen, a famous china town, Fu Guosheng is painting fish on china. Fujian puppet maker Xu Zhuchu is working on puppets which are used to sing local opera. And kung fu fans can see the live show there.

"This intangible cultural craftsmanship is against the fast pace of modern life. Less and less young people want to learn this traditional treasure," said Wang Baolin. "But there are still some people like us, hoping to pass it down to the next generation."

So far, four China's heritages have made UNESCO list - Kunqu Opera, *Guqin* (art of ancient qin, Chinese zither), Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam (a kind of music), and *Urtiin Duu* - Mongolian traditional folk Long Song.

This year, the Ministry of Culture has chosen 501 examples of intangible heritages from 1,315 applications sent by local cultural departments to apply for the world heritage. Six traditional festivals, series of cultural traditions to be protected, such as Spring Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival, have been included.

The show tells that the improper or excessive development of heritage sites has threatened the country's cultural relics and some of treasures have been destroyed due to improper storage or handling and lost through generations. For instance, of the 52 kinds of Shanxi Operas only 28 remain today.

Therefore, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage will create national standards and formulate a series of rules or regulations to manage and protect them, according to its deputy director, Zhang Bai. He also revealed a national committee for cultural relics protection will be shouldered with responsibilities to promote healthy development of cultural relics, and avoid and prevent further losses from technical mistakes.

The second Saturday in June has been named Cultural Heritage Day as of this year. A national general survey is also under construction to list provincial, city and county levels of cultural heritage.



The recorder recorded A Bing's *Erquan Yinyue* in 1950



*Guqin* from the Tang Dynasty



*Guqin* from the Song Dynasty



# French cinema: a feast for the senses



By Shelley Xie

The Lantern Festival last Sunday announced a successful ending to the third annual French Film Panorama, which gave the Chinese movie fans a chance to enjoy and appreciate the artistic values of French movies. This time, eleven films and seven guests, including directors, actors and actresses, came face-to-face with the public in Beijing cinemas.

Among the films, *Caché* (Hidden) and *Joyeux Noel* (Merry Christmas) were shown at the Cannes Film Festival 2005. The former won Best Director and the latter will compete for the Best Foreign Film title at next month's Oscars.

Obviously love is always a touching theme for emotional folk, no matter whether it grows between different nations, between parents and children, or between men and women.

*Joyeux Noel* (Merry Christmas) is one of the magnificent movies that really touched me. It's adapted from a true story. On Christmas Eve 1914, soldiers from France, England and Germany ceased fire to celebrate the holiday together on the battlefield of World War I. I strongly believe that people of different religious beliefs or races have the same feelings, as human beings. There is something good in everyone.

The scenes are cruel when they are enemies - killing each other to save their own lives, to protect their countries and people. Their countries told them it was holy and heroic. But only the audience sitting in front of the big screen could see the real love in these men's hearts - soldiers kissing the photos of their beloved wives and families in three trenches before battle.

Christian Carion, the director, really makes us to think about

the 'explainable excuses' so-called big-powers use to disregard the values of life and the love of humanity. Also, the acting is excellent, and the actors are able to make us understand what they feel with only a look.

*L'avion* (The Plane), is a charming fantasy that takes us back to childhood. Produced with children in mind, many Chinese and French kids came to watch, quiet as church mice. Cédric Kahn creates a lively model airplane to show us how Charley (the main character) learns to grow up without the care of his father. The childlike innocence introduces a simpler world to the adults, and wins tears from soft hearted viewers.

Because of those little kids, the communication between the director and the audience became the most interesting of the many post film question and answer sessions. Kahn asked one Chinese girl why she thought the plane was leaving. She answered: "Because it's too big and inconvenient for little Charley to carry when he escapes from the bad chaser." Kahn and bigger audience members laughed and applauded.

*Le Courage d'Aimer* (The Courage of Love) is a romantic movie about the love between men and women. The director Claude Lelouch is a master to twist and turn the plot, which draws our eyes to find out what will develop.

After the film, he told us that his films are all based on true stories around him. "The theme of my movie is about the faith to love," he said when asked why he turns the national motto Liberty, Equality and Fraternity to Liberty, Equality and Unfaithfulness in the movie. "Our faithful love to a spouse is tested when someone better appears, because we naturally pursue beautiful and good things in our life." The one who is loyal to love is the final victor.



The model of Guanghe Da Zhalou

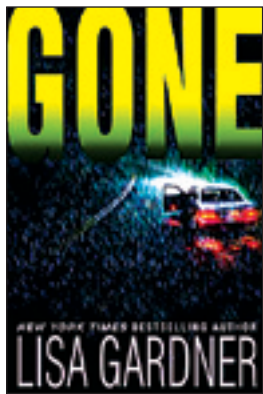


## Bestseller booklists 3rd week Feb.

by Jia Ting

## US – New York Times Bestsellers

1. *Cell*, by Stephen King
2. *The Da Vinci Code*, by Dan Brown
3. *Memory in Death*, by JD Robb
4. *Gone*, by Lisa Gardner



(A former FBI profiler searches for the kidnapper of his ex-wife.)

5. *The Last Templar*, by Raymond Khoury

## Amazon.com Bestsellers

1. *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*, by Thomas L. Friedman
2. *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, by Steven D Levitt and Stephen J Dubner
3. *Night (Oprah's Book Club)*, by Elie Wiesel
4. *Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog*, by John Grogan
5. *Cell: A Novel*, by Stephen King

## UK – The Guardian Bestsellers

1. *Labyrinth*, by Kate Mosse
2. *The Undomestic Goddess*, by Sophie Kinsella
3. *Saturday*, by Ian McEwan
4. *Memoirs of a Geisha*, by Arthur Golden

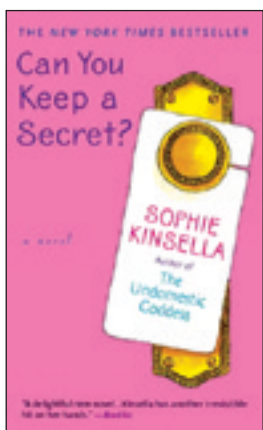


(A tale that tells the story of a geisha girl, uncovering a hidden world of eroticism and enchantment, exploitation and degradation.)

5. *The Broker*, by John Grisham
- France – Fnac.com Bestsellers**
1. *Deception Point*, by Dan Brown
  2. *Les Aventures de Jack Palmer: T13 (The Adventures of Jack Palmer: T13)*, by Petillon
  3. *Les Chroniques de Narnia: Le Monde de Narnia (The Chronicles of Narnia)*, by CS Lewis
  4. *La Trilogie de L'Heritage: Eragon (Trilogy of Heritage: Eragon)*, by Christopher Paolini
  5. *Brokeback Mountain*, by Annie Proulx

## Germany – Amazon.de Bestsellers

1. *With No One As Witness*, by Elizabeth George
2. *Can You Keep A Secret?*, by Sophie Kinsella



3. *Villages*, by John Updike
  4. *The Da Vinci Code*, by Dan Brown
  5. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, by JK Rowling
- China – Joyo.com Bestsellers**
1. *Running with Scissors: A Memoir*, by Augusten Burroughs
  2. *The Ideal City*, by Han Han
  3. *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*, by John Gray
  4. *You Are What You Eat*, by Gillian McKeith
  5. *The Da Vinci Code*, by Dan Brown

## Feminist pioneer dies



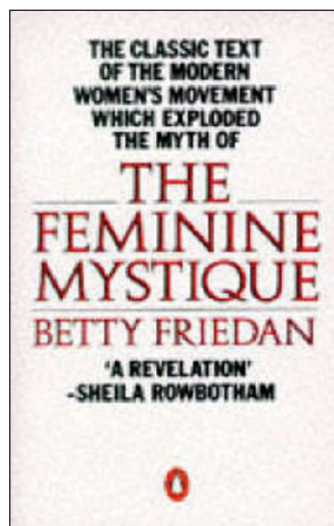
Betty Friedan

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Betty Friedan, a feminist crusader and author of *Feminine Mystique*, died on her 85th birthday in Washington DC on February 4, 2006.

*Feminine Mystique* was Ms. Friedan's first and most influential work. In the book, Friedan presents many examples of ordinary housewives after World War II and expresses their dissatisfaction with a life centered by a husband and children. The book was taken as the one of the sparks that drove the women's movement in the 70s US. It was published in 1963.

Friedan depicts the ideal feminine image in the famous chapter *The Problem that Has No Name*: "The suburban housewife-she was the dream image of the young American woman and the envy, it was said, of women all over the world. The American housewife – freed by science and labor-saving appliances from the drudgery, the dangers of childbirth and the illnesses of her grandmother. She was healthy, beautiful, educated, concerned only about her husband, her children, her home. She had found true feminine fulfillment. As a housewife and mother, she was respected as a full and equal partner to man in his world. She was free to choose automobiles, clothes, appliances, supermarkets; she had everything that women ever dreamed of." However, "As she made the beds, shopped



for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night – she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question – 'Is this all?'"

The question became the core of the early feminist development. Women started to campaign to win equal social status. Although just 3,000 copies were printed in 1963, the book is No. 37 on a 1999 New York University survey of 100 examples of the best journalism of the twentieth century.

Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, publisher of *Ms* magazine and a former president of the National Organization for Women, praised Friedan as "...a giant for women's rights

and a leading catalyst of the 20th century whose work led to profound changes improving the status of women and women's lives worldwide." *The Feminine Mystique* helped to "define the lesser status of women," she said.

Friedan, born February 4, 1921, in Peoria, Illinois, was a high achieving Jewish outsider growing up in middle America. After graduation from the Smith College, the best US women's college, in 1942, she won a fellowship to enter the University of California, Berkeley. She experienced a difficult romance and divorce later in her life. After the publication of *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan founded National Organization for Women in 1966 and became the first president. She has been central to the reshaping of American attitudes toward women's lives and rights all her life.

## To read more works by Betty Friedan:

**The Second Stage: With a New Introduction:** First published in 1981, Friedan warned the women's movement to be against dissolving into factionalism, male-bashing, and preoccupation with sexual and identity politics rather than bottom-line political and economic inequalities.

**Fountain of Age:** Friedan confronts the reality of women's aging in this book. On the best-sellers list for six weeks.

## Review

## Paradise Travel

By Jorge Franco, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 228 pages



Jorge Franco is a Colombian novelist on the rise, a leader of what is being called the "McOn-do" school of fiction, a group of writers seemingly intent on upending the magical realism. *Paradise Travel*, Franco's fourth novel, tells the story of Marlon Cruz, a guileless young Colombian dragged into the world of illegal border crossings by his troubled and wilful girlfriend, Reina. After being cheated and abused in a variety of imaginatively conceived ways, they arrive in Queens, New York, where instead of finding the marital bliss that Reina has promised Marlon, the two are accidentally separated. Marlon's odyssey through the illegal and quasi-legal underbelly of New York is sobering and the frustration. (*Christian Science Monitor*)

## Written Lives

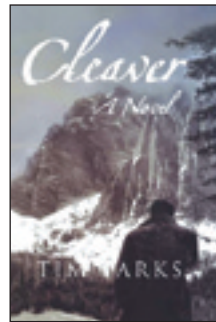
By Javier Marias, Canongate 200 pages



Spanish writer Javier Marias has been celebrated around the world for decades as a master of fiction and non-fiction. *Written Lives*, which contains essays on well-known literary figures, probably won't do much to broaden his reputation, but it does prove what a beguiling, clever and original writer Marias is. The book is a survey of 26 international authors, among them Conan Doyle, Madame du Deffand, Faulkner, Kipling, Nabokov, Rilke, Sterne and Wilde, who led illustrious but primarily tragic lives. Marias knows the dangers of taking on subjects who have been dissected many times over, and his solution is to treat them 'as if they were fictional characters'. As an observer-cum-biographer, he allows himself to embellish history, filter material, omit certain facts and dwell on others, stopping short of invention. (*Guardian*)

## Cleaver

By Tim Parks, Harvill Secker, 320 pages

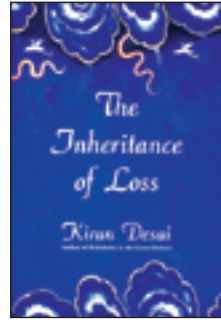


Tim Parks is the Andy Warhol of contemporary literature. *Cleaver*, his new novel, is at times funny and painfully honest. The hero of the story – Harold Cleaver is a media behemoth. But at the age of 55 his personal and professional lives suddenly hit a critical juncture. His eldest son, Alex, publishes a damning fictionalised portrait of Cleaver. Withdrawing from the world, Cleaver ends up in a rented shack on the edge of a gorge in the South Tyrol. There's no electricity, no hot water and, most significantly, no reception on his mobile. A comic fable on how modern man can plummet without the reassuring safety net of technology and discourse. Cleaver is a combination of J Alfred Prufrock and Reggie Perrin, floundering in the dusk of life, not knowing whether to confront his demons or retreat into fantasies. (*Independent*)

By Wang Chun

## The Inheritance of Loss

By Kiran Desai, Atlantic Monthly Press, 324 pages



Kiran Desai's extraordinary new novel manages to explore, with intimacy and insight, just about every contemporary international issue: globalization, multiculturalism, economic inequality, fundamentalism and terrorist violence. Despite being set in the mid-1980's, it seems the best kind of post-9/11 novel. In a once-sturdy house in Kalimpong, in the spectacular Himalayan foothills, live an old judge, his dog and his 17-year-old granddaughter Sai; in a nearby shack is the household's linchpin, the wretchedly underpaid cook. Desai employs a kaleidoscopic technique to illuminate the fractured lives of the judge, Sai, and Biju, the son of the cook, who belongs to the "shadow class" of illegal immigrant in New York. Though relieved by much humor, the book may strike many readers as offering an unrelentingly bitter view. (*New York Times*)

## Mark Twain: A Life

By Ron Powers, Free Press, 723 pages



His real name is Samuel Langhorne Clemens. But he called himself Mark Twain, after the cry of the leadsmen sounding the depths in the treacherous waters of the Mississippi (twain=12 feet). As a skinny youth shifting type trays on the *Hannibal Journal* or learning the trade of a river pilot, he was unmissable: a tiny scarecrow boiling with resentment at his own obscurity and the world's injustice, drunk half the time, with a belligerent glare and a great fuzz of red hair and an odd, rocking, shambling gait. By the time he was 40 he was an international celebrity. Everyone wanted to meet him, from Matthew Arnold to the Kaiser, strangers waved to him from the shore when he sailed across the Great Lakes. (*Spectator*)

## Stutter

By Marc Shell, Harvard, 217 pages



Marc Shell, a Harvard comp lit professor with a stutter, made a high school foray into literary criticism by comparing the speech patterns of Hamlet to those of Porky Pig. Both figures are "scant of breath" and speak "trippingly on the tongue." In *Stutter*, his impressive survey of cultural figures with "cloven tongues" (including God), Shell describes the trauma of being unable to speak right. Stutter explores the phenomenon of stuttering from its practical and physical aspects to its historical profile to its existential implications. Shell offers an impressive if challenging memoir-cum-treatise on the contributions of stuttering to the arts and beyond. His virtuosic ability to summon references from neuroscience, religion and philosophy is both exhilarating and exhausting. (*Village Voice*)

## What's on local shelves

By Wang Xiaoyuan

## CNPIEC Book Store

## April Shadows

By V.C.Andrews

406 pages 80 yuan

April and Brenda are two very different sisters. Or are they? April is chubby and shy and Brenda is athletic and outgoing. And Brenda prefers women. While it takes April a while to realize it, she struggles with her own identity. After the deaths of both their mother and father, things spiral downhill pretty fast for the girls. Brenda is so clearly unhappy and takes out her frustrations with her athletic prowess.

**Where:** 2nd floor of China National Publications Import & Export Corporation, 16 Gongti Dong Lu  
**Tel:** 6500 1859



## Bookworm:

## Oh The Glory of it All

By Sean Wilentz

479 pages, 165 yuan

A memoir of the author's family relationships, especially his mother and step mother. One must take expansive sections of recalled dialogue with a grain of salt, but Wilentz's short, unflinching sentences keep his outlandish story moving too quickly for much quibbling. Still the story is neither shocking nor surprising, but human.

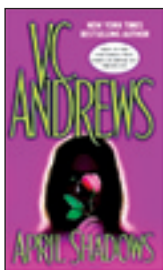
## Journeys in the Dead Season

By Spencer Jordan

354 pages, 105 yuan

Juxtaposing the experiences of a shellshock victim in the early 1920s with the recollections of an alleged child-murderer in the present day, *Journeys in the Dead Season* is a masterpiece of psychological complexity and subtlety.

**Where:** Yard 4, Sanlitun Nanjie, Gongti Beilu  
**Tel:** 65869507





# Istanbul: Keeps the real taste of food



Stuffed calamari

By Han Manman

It can be argued that Turkish cuisine ranks as one of the three richest and oldest cooking traditions of the world together with French and Chinese cooking. "I don't like ranking things, but Turkish food is really one of the most popular in the world," Mrs. Serpil said. Born in Istanbul, she is a passionate and humorous lady.

As a bridge between east and west, Istanbul is rightly credited with being Turkey's dining capital. The main aspect of Istanbul cuisine is maintaining the real taste: the dishes are supposed to bring out the flavor of the main ingredient rather than hiding it under sauces or spices. Thus, eggplant should taste like eggplant, lamb like lamb, pumpkin like pumpkin, and so on.

## Common food

Istanbul citizens are proud of their local seafood and rarely import any. "Some kinds of fish you can only find here, such as bluefish-lufer, which is for me the most delicious fish in the world. The water temperature, the salt level and the streams feeding the nearby Bosphorus create a perfect habitat for the most delicious fish species," she said.

"You don't have to add any sauces, just enjoy the pure taste of the meat," In Istanbul, the most popular fish – *Hamsi* – is also the cheapest one.

One of the prominent ingredients in Istanbul cuisine is olive oil. Turks cook all kinds of vegetables, mostly in olive oil.

Chinese love to feast on the streets and buy delicious snacks from vendors wheeling carts, and Turks are no different. The word 'kebab' simply means 'roasted', and is synonymous with Istanbul. A vast selection of kebabs and other meat dishes can easily be found in the street. Doner kebabs are made by stacking alternating layers of ground meat and sliced leg of lamb on a large upright skewer, which is slowly rotated in front of a vertical grill. As the outer layer of the meat is roasted, thin slices are shaved off and served.

## The Imam Fainted

Eggplant slashed down the middle and stuffed with onions, garlic, and tomatoes and then simmered in olive oil is one of the most famous of Istanbul's olive oil dishes. The dish is also own an interesting name – Imam Fainted. "Imam is a Muslim religious person. The story goes when one Imam tasted how good it was he fainted," Serpil said.

This cold dish is really tasty, with a sweet and sour flavor, and usually comes with Turkish bread.

According to Serpil, bread is sacred in Turkish cuisine as it symbolizes the important of the food, as it was the staple food in the past. "To teach people food is not some-



Imam fainted

thing to be spoiled and wasted, there is a ritual that if bread falls on the ground you can't throw it away. You have to pick it up, kiss the bread, and touch it to your forehead. You do this three times and then feed it to the animals," Serpil said.

## Religious dish – Asure

It is one of the oldest and most traditional Turkish desserts. Fifteen or more ingredients are used to make *Asure*. It is usually made and served during the religious month called 'Asure Month', which follows 'The Feast of Sacrifice'. During Asure month this kind of pudding-like dish is prepared in large amounts in almost every household, and is offered to guests as well as being sent to relatives and neighbors.

Serpil said there is a legend about the origins of this dessert in Turkey. When Noah's Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat in northeastern Turkey, they wanted to celebrate the fact they were safe. But their supplies were exhausted. So, they hunted through the Ark and put every bit of food they could find and cooked them together to make a splendid feast of *Asure*.

"In the Asure month, you must eat it whenever others offer it to you even you don't like it," said Serpil.

## Coffee shows your fortune

In Turkey, there's much more to coffee than just drinking an aromatic brew. In addition to being a strong stimulant, it foretells the future. In Turkey, if you would like your fortune told after finishing the coffee, you should turn your cup upside down on the

cold symptoms.

"Turkish people have a saying, if you want to seize a man's heart, you should first seize his stomach." This could be true all around the world.

## Stuffed Calamari

### Ingredients:

- 6 pieces of calamari
- 1 onion
- 1 glass of rice
- 1.5 tablespoon of pistachios
- 1.5 tablespoon of currants
- 1 teaspoon of pimento (all spice)
- 1 pinch of dill
- Salt, black pepper and sugar
- 4 tablespoons of olive oil

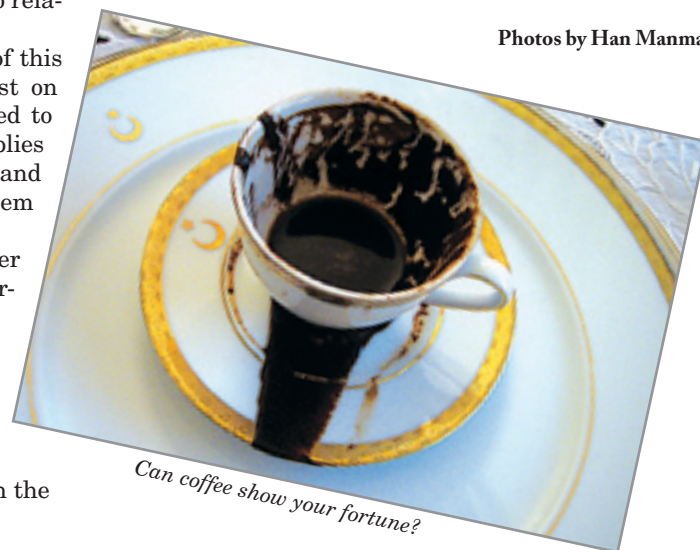
### Direction:

Boil cleaned calamari and put them aside.

Stir-fry chopped onion with pistachio nuts in olive oil, add rice and currants. After adding all the spices, salt and a pinch of sugar, and simmer for 20 minutes. Add chopped dill when the ingredients get cool.

Stuff the calamari with the prepared filling. Put the stuffed calamari in a pot, add half a glass of water and two spoons of olive oil, and simmer for 15-20 minutes.

Serve cool.



Photos by Han Manman

Can coffee show your fortune?



This week's guest: Mrs. Serpil Ozuye, wife of the ambassador of the Republic of Turkey

saucer and allowed it to cool. The hostess then performs a fortune reading from the coffee grounds remaining in the cup and saucer. "It's a pity that I'm not good at coffee reading," Serpil said. "My daughter likes doing it. Some Turks can tell you your fortune for hours."

In Turkey, when a girl is to be introduced to the parents of the boy she is to marry, she should offer them coffee. The girl may be welcomed or rejected based on the way she does this.

Beside Turkish coffee, *raki* is also well known in Turkey. *Raki* is clear brandy made from grapes and raisins, flavored with pungent anise, and diluted with water. When mixed with ice and/or water, it turns milky white. Because of its color and alcoholic punch, Turks call it 'lion's milk'. Serpil said *raki* was also used as a healing medicine for common-



A Tuchia style cake shop

## Pizza-like cake sales hot



Pizza-like cake

Photos by Fu Ruijuan

## By Fu Ruijuan

Believe it or not, Tuchia style cake shops are popping up everywhere in Beijing overnight like mushrooms after rain. What's more surprising is people are willing to wait in line for up to half an hour to buy one (2.5 yuan each).

The pizza-like cake is called *tujia diaozha shaobing* (crisp baked sesame cake) and is a local delicacy from the Tuchia ethnic group that inhabits Hubei Province. It has swept many big cities in China, including Shanghai and Nanjing in just a few months.

Like an ordinary baked sesame cake, it is also made of flour and covered with sesame seeds. However, it has meat stuffing inside and what's more important, the Tuchia delicacy contains chopped chives and minced meat. It is glazed with pepper and chili powder and resembles an Italian pizza.

Chen Yun, a woman waiting in line for the cake, said, "It is not my first time to buy one. The cake is delicious and smells great. I already had my lunch, but I couldn't help coming here to buy one when I smelled its aroma."

Not all people agree. Liu Hongli, a student from Beijing Foreign Studies University, said the sesame cake only smells great and doesn't deserve such a reputation.

Whether it is delicious or not, there is no doubt that the business is profitable. If people buy four cakes, they can get one for free, a policy that attracts more customers.



## Hot diggety dog!

By Veronica Smith

There are several names for a sausage in a bun: frankfurters, named after the city of Frankfurt; wieners, named after the city of Vienna; and hot dogs, obviously not named after a city. Why 'hot dog'?

The story goes that it comes from German sausages that were sold in New York in the 1860's called dachshunds or 'badger dogs' (Dachs = badger; Hund = dog). The actual dog has a long body, very short legs and droopy ears and was bred for hunting badgers; obviously their long shape lent their name to the sausage. So popu-

lar is the Dachshund dog in Germany that it was chosen to be the mascot Waldis for the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich.

Saying "get your hot dachshund sausages here" is a mouthful for vendors to cry out; hence it was shortened to "get your hot dogs here". There are other meanings for hot dog, someone who is a bit of a show-off, usually while playing a sport, and there is a slang expression from the early 1900s: 'hot diggety dog!' that expresses happiness. But we don't recommend that English learners add these to their vocabulary, as they have gone out of fashion, and

you should also consult a native speaker before using the word 'wiener'.

In England sausages are known as 'bangers' because if they are badly made they can explode during cooking, or a banger is also a small firecracker that goes BANG! as you walk past. So celebrate the year of the dog by taking your hound for a walk, eating hot-dogs, setting-off bangers - but don't be calling anyone a wiener!

**Ingredients and directions:** Any kind of sausage cooked the way you like stuffed into a hot dog bun and covered with your favorite condiments: anything goes!

## 热狗

原料和做法: 任何种类的香肠按照你喜欢的做法做好后放入热狗面包中, 配上你喜欢的调料, 随意搭配!

Translated by William King

After a month of Chinese New Year feasts, next week's menu is for small but delicious tofu and sesame treats!

Painted by Darrell Hill

## Veronica's Recipes





## Movies

### Transporter 2

Directed by Louis Leterrier, starring Jason Statham, Amber Valletta and Matthew Modine. Frank Martin is the best in the business. The ex-Special Forces operative hires himself out as a mercenary 'transporter' who moves goods and humans. Very simply, he delivers, no questions asked. Frank has relocated from the French Mediterranean to Miami, Florida, where as a favor to a friend, he drives for the wealthy Billings family. But Frank has unexpectedly

bonded with young Jack Billings who is only six.

**Where:** Cineplex across Beijing **When:** From February 14 Tickets at 6417 7845

### Life and Death

Directed by Liu Xin, the movie documents the rise of political ambitions of Chen Lisheng. Chen is the son of a high-ranking government official. Chen's mother died in the war. Through his diligence and hard work, Chen is promoted to the director of a governmental department. However, those closest to him all take advantage of his power to make lots of money.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, An Jia Lou inside the Kent Center, Chaoyang **When:** 8 pm, February

17-18 **Admission:** 50 yuan Tel: 6466 2288

### Cinema Paradiso

Directed by Giuseppe Tornatore, starring Philippe Noiret, Salvatore Cascio and Marco Leonardi. A famous film director returns home to a Sicilian village for the first time after 30 years. He reminisces about his childhood at the Cinema Paradiso where Alfredo, the projectionist, first brought about his love of films. He is also reminded of his lost teenage love, Elena, whom he had to leave before he left for Rome.

**Where:** Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'erjie, Sanlitun, Chaoyang **When:** 7 pm, February 23 **Admission:** Free **Tel:** 6532 2187

### Like Water for Chocolate

Directed by Alfonso Arau. Tita and Pedro are passionately in love. But their love is forbidden by an ancient family tradition. To be near Tita, Pedro marries her sister, and Tita, as the family cook, expresses her passion for Pedro through preparing delectable dishes. Now, in Tita's kitchen, ordinary spices become a recipe for passion. Her creations bring on tears of longing, heated desire or chronic pain-while Tita and Pedro wait for the moment to fulfill their most hidden pleasures.

**Where:** Mexican Embassy, 5 Sanlitun Dongjie, Chaoyang **When:** 7:30 pm, February 22 **Admission:** Free **Tel:** 6532 2244

## Exhibitions

### Renovation - Relations of Production



This is a get-together exhibition of the artists of Long March Space - there you can see recent works of Gao Feng, Huang Xuebin, Liu Ding, Li Songhua, Shi Jing, Shi Wanyan, Wang Mai, Wang Peng, and Wu Xiaojun. They make the process of renovation of Long March Space into an art experience. Examine the changing space for the advancement of Chinese art.

**Where:** Long March Space, 798 Art District, Chaoyang **When:** till February 26 **Tel:** 6438 7107

### Ji Xiaofeng - Innocence



Ji Xiaofeng uses the flowing and graceful lines to tell the spirit and energy of youth. Innocence and past memories are captured in rich colors.

**Where:** Beijing Central Art Gallery, 1 Nongzhanguan

**Nanlu When:** 8:30 am-7 pm, February 17-24 **Admission:** Free **Tel:** 6585 9902

### Onemoon Art

Group exhibition features oil paintings by Li Tianyuan, Sun Liang, Wang Guangle and Zhou Yangming; sculptures by Liang Shuo; ink paintings by Gao Ping, Liu Liyun; and photographs by Han Lei.

**Where:** Onemoon Art, Ditan Park, Andingmenwai Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** 11 am-7 pm, Tuesday-Sunday, until February 28 **Tel:** 6427 7748

### Modern oil painting exhibition



The bustle, pressure, troubles and limited choice of today's society incessantly circumscribe everyone. People yearn for quiet, calm and understanding. Come and taste painter Jiang Tianyu's

work, you can feel another kind of life in your heart.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, 1-1E Huaweili, Chaoyang **When:** 9:30 am-7 pm, until February 28 **Tel:** 8779 0461

## Jams



### Alternative 80s Night

Lady Marmalade brings her circus back to Alfa. Scrap the school uniforms and the turquoise sweaters as she plays all the 80s music you love - Iggy Pop, Blondie, The Cure, Depeche Mode, and The Smiths. Supported by unworthy DJs Vinyl Ritchie, Side B and Sweet FA.

**Where:** Alfa, 5 Xingfuyicun, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm, February 18 **Admission:** Free **Tel:** 6413 0086

## Activities

### Temple circuit

This is a flexible hike. You may go into the park, have a look at the temples, follow the steps up the hill to the lookout on the top. If you are adventurous, you may take the trail that starts from the top, do a three-hour hike, and come back to the start. The walk is suitable for families, but for the second part of the walk the children would have to be fairly good walkers.

**Where:** Pinggu District, north of Beijing. **When:** February 19, leaving at 8 am from the Lido Hotel outside of Starbucks. **Cost:** 200 yuan for adults, 150 for children under 12 **Tel:** 13910025516 (Reservations essential)

### Chinese Traditional Culture Club

There are activities about antique furniture appreciation, Chinese art and calligraphy, and Chinese culture lectures in both English and Chinese. This is an enjoyable opportunity to practice Chinese and to gain an appreciation of Chinese culture.

**Where:** Traditional Culture Club, Room 128 Estoril House, 2 Jiangtailu, Chaoyang **When:** 4 pm-7 pm, Wednesday and Thursday, 10 am-12 am, 3 pm-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday **Tel:** 6437 9280, 13366152407

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## Personal Classifieds

Wu Qiong, Chinese girl, 20 years old. Junior student and major in Chinese. I want to find an English native speaker as my friend who can help me with my spoken English. Meantime, I can teach her Chinese. Contact: emma\_729@hotmail.com

I am honest, romantic, humorous, compassionate, single, handsome, athletic, well stature, like exercise, gourmet cooking, and intelligent conversation with smart girls. Looking for my fere from 18-36 years old. Contact: tangojaguar@yahoo.com.

Ms. Wang, graduate from School of Translation and Interpretation of Beijing Foreign Studies University, consecutive and simultaneous interpreter Contact: 8964 8064, 13146309328, wjade111@yahoo.com.cn

## Performances

### Traditional Chinese Acrobatics Show



The incredible Chinese acrobatics hit the stage this spring. You'll see many exciting skills like jujitsu, spinning plates, trapeze artists, foot jugglers and bicycle feats.

**Where:** Chaoyang Theater, 5 Jintai Beijie, Chaoyang **When:** 7:15 pm-8:30 pm, through the recent month **Admission:** 180-380 yuan Tickets at 6417 7845

## Music

### 2006 Beijing Symphony Orchestra Series Season

Beijing Symphony Orchestra will perform *Symphony No.12* by Shostakovitch, *Symphony No.2* by Sibelius, *Tibetan Dance* by Fang Kejie and *Symphony No.3* by Rachmaninoff, under the baton of Tan Lihua.

**Where:** Forbidden City Music Hall, Dongcheng **When:** 7:30 pm, February 25-March 11 **Admission:** 30-380 yuan Tickets at: 6417 7845

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By Lu Xiaonan



# Vocational training set to fly

By Feng Nianhua

Network editor, commercial ads designer, commodity logistic planner and family finance advisor are the latest four professional skill certificates the municipal government is expected to issue in the coming weeks. To this end, the Municipal Labor Bureau is organizing related training courses to university campuses, hoping the training and certificates can ease job-hunting pressure in the fierce graduation labor market.

Meanwhile, another 21 certificates and training programs are under preparation, according to Song Fengjing, deputy director general of the bureau at a working seminar on the city's vocational training this week.

Among the certificates will be electrical machinery installer, animal quarantine inspector, machinery equipment installer, laundry operator and labor interest protector.

University students welcome the training and certificates, believing these will enable them to find jobs more easily.

The central government is also advocating professional training and education to fill in the huge gap between qualified and skilled labor supply and demand.

"We have too many university students and too few skilled laborers," Song explained.

Therefore, vocational schools are set to expand from this year. Beijing plans to enroll 42,000 students for its vocational schools this year, the same amount for its university education sector. This is the first time that the two enrolment figures stand the same.

"Vocational school student numbers are expected to further increase," promised Song, "as we have such a huge population throughout the country and need more highly qualified laborers than academics."

But before reaching that target, providing vocational training for university students is a practical option. More than 12,000 university students received training last year in the capital. The courses cover IT, secretary, HR management, auto repair, e-commerce operation, and digital machinery operation.

Many other cities are doing the same. Shenzhen is investing 100 million yuan to set up the first national high-level professional training center to meet the city, and the country's demand. The center is to open later this year, according to the Yangcheng Evening News.

For more details, please check [www.bjld.gov.cn](http://www.bjld.gov.cn)



Vocational training is ready to expand this year.

CFP Photo

## Seeking Jobs

Female, Beijinger, graduated from University of International Business and Economics, major in international trade, MBA degree, 5 years work experience, if you want a good hand for business or English interpreter in Beijing, please contact Linda by email: [teflclub@yahoo.com.cn](mailto:teflclub@yahoo.com.cn) mobile: 8695 2269, (+86) 136 8337 9199

Brighten, male, from Beijing, 44, certified public accountant, experienced at accounting, taxation and financial management, good at reading, listening and spoken English, is looking for a part-time job related to accountancy, consultation and audit. Contact: [brightenmy@yahoo.com.cn](mailto:brightenmy@yahoo.com.cn), 13701291705

Female, 24, a native university graduate with two years experience as a office clerk, is seeking a part-time job as an English guide and accompany. [yubrcj@yahoo.com.cn](mailto:yubrcj@yahoo.com.cn)

I am a PhD student in GUCAS (Institute Of MicroElectronics) looking for a part time job.

I have 5 years of teaching experience in Pakistan. Sheraz Anjum at 82847120, 13581806434

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Special deals for charities, hospitals and schools. Email Mr. Magic at: [parsons59@yahoo.com](mailto:parsons59@yahoo.com)

A native Chinese university student, with one year experience as a Chinese tutor to foreigners is seeking a job as a language teacher. [layla8311@yahoo.com.cn](mailto:layla8311@yahoo.com.cn)

Wayne Tian is looking for a job related to mechanics and electronics. He has good English speaking and listening skills. 13811508491, 6524 5508

Ivan Young, a new graduate from Beijing International Study University, is looking for a job as a business interpreter, management assistant, public relations officer, HR officer, or office secretary. [ivan1339@sina.com](mailto:ivan1339@sina.com), 13811243074

## Vacancies

Novotel Zhongguancun Beijing is looking for a HR Director/ Manager:

- \* previous experience in a 4 or 5 star international hotel would be a plus
- \* fluent written and spoken English.

- \* good communication and organization skills.
- \* able to manage, train and motivate the team.

Interested applicants, please send CV to : [gm@novotelbeijingzgc.com](mailto:gm@novotelbeijingzgc.com)

Novotel Zhongguancun Beijing (under pre-opening) is looking for an IT Director/ Manager, interested candidates, please send CV and motivation to : [gm@novotelbeijingzgc.com](mailto:gm@novotelbeijingzgc.com)

The Southern Industrial Zone, Bincheng District, Binzhou, Shandong Province, is looking for two reps and five consultants in Beijing.

Contact: Mr. Chen at 13561569235

(Send positions offered and wanted info to: [ayi@ynet.com](mailto:ayi@ynet.com). Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy or authenticity of the information published.)

## Unemployment expected to increase

China is to face a record unemployment figure of 25 million this year, warns the State Commission of Development and Reform in a report issued this week.

The report says the maximum new jobs the government can create is 8 million. The total can reach 11 million, with another 3 million from the market. This leaves a gap of 14 million unemployed, 1 million more than last year's figure.

Of the total unemployed, 60 percent come from the rural population, most of which will go to cities and towns to look for jobs.

The report points out in particular that university graduates are facing increasing employment pressure this year because the number of graduates from universities, colleges and institutes will reach a peak of 4.13 million, 750,000 more than last year.

The commission appeals for a joint seminar between government ministries, administrations and agencies on how to solve the problem.

(Xinhua)

## Interviewers' favorite questions

By Feng Nianhua

Different positions may have different requirements on job applicants. However, different interviewers might have the same questions. Experts list 12 questions that are often put forward by interviewers. As a job hunter, are you ready for those questions?

- What are your strong suits?
- Are you satisfied with your performance at university?
- How do you evaluate your university life?
- What social activities do you enjoy?
- What foreign languages do you know?
- Why are you applying for the position?
- How much do you know about the industry, the interviewer's company and the position you are going to apply for?
- What type of job do you think you are suited to do?
- What's the important factor for you when seeking a job?
- If my company can't offer you a position you want, would you like to accept the rearrangement by the company?
- If the work arrangement is not in the line with your specialty, what do you think about it?
- Do you have any plans to study abroad or study further, for instance a graduate program?

Experts suggest job seekers keep their hands dry and firm when shaking hands, communicate with the interviewer with eye contact, and use appropriate body gestures, to avoid stepping into the non-language traps.

## Expats in BJ:

# Sam Voutas — This Crash Tester is no dummy



Sam is pointing the way for other educators and filmmakers in Beijing.

Photo by Christopher Parsons

By Christopher Parsons

Sam Voutas is not only the writer/director of *Crash Test*, an Australian science-fiction feature. He is also a high level educator who shares words and gifts and gifts of words on career options, business struggles and job opportunities for foreigners in Beijing.

**Q: What are your career goals here?**

**A:** I want to be creative, avoid the 'lao wai' void, polish my Chinese, and ultimately to sink my feet as deep as possible into local cinema.

**Q: What creative things do you see yourself doing next year?**

**A:** Writing a feature film script. Just shuffling through ideas now.

**Q: What makes Beijing different from other film center cities in the world?**

**A:** Opportunity. In my home country, there is a well-trodden ladder that must be climbed to get anywhere. In China, that ladder is more elastic and can be thrown away altogether at times.

**Q: Can you tell us about some of your projects that helped your career goals?**

**A:** I've just wrapped work at the Australian Film Festival, where I was assisting the actors and producers from down under who had made the trip up here. It was a great opportunity to work with industry folk I'd never get to meet back home.

I've also recently finished acting in a short student film from the Beijing Central Dramatic Academy.

In addition, an Australian science-fiction feature which I wrote and directed, *Crash Test*, is having a national DVD release in the USA in January, so I am keen to see it hit the shelves here.

**Q: What advice can you give newcomers to the industry in Beijing?**

**A:** Contact me. I am keen to meet anybody with an interest in film, television, music. The world has too many high horses so why fight when we can swap war stories.

**Q: Where do people in the Beijing film industry hang out?**

**A:** Waiting for Godot Café near the Lama Temple, or cornered in my little edit suite near Ghost Street.

**Q: I know you are a movie director, but in your way up the ladder have you had any crazy job offers in Beijing?**

**A:** To work as a maid.

**Q: How do you integrate teaching English and filmmaking?**

**A:** Teaching takes up only a small part of the brain, so I can think about films on the way to, and sometimes, during work. Filmmaking, meanwhile, takes up 100 percent of the brain, and more of the soul. It is draining, so it is nice to 'switch off' and go to work. Many of my students are from Korea or Japan, so it is often an eye-opener to discuss cinema trends in their own countries.

**Q: What non-school education or learning helped you the most?**

**A:** Working as a bartender in the old Beijing pub All Bar Nothing was wonderful for its characters and stories. People will confess more to their bartender than to their priest.

**Q: Any advice for newbie filmmakers?**

**A:** Read Robert Rodriguez's *Rebel Without a Clue*. A book of great wisdom and wit, which deconstructs the myths and so-called rules of filmmaking.

**Q: What is the biggest business scam you ever ran into?**

**A:** An actor friend of mine got a call from somebody who called themselves a "big actor's agent". My buddy agreed to meet, only to see that the man was dressed very shabbily, had little idea of film or TV, and that the "big movie" script he had brought was photocopied, badly. The agent said he'd love to give him a lead role in a TV series, but it would cost him 20,000 kuai. My friend, angered by the ruse, decided to turn the tables. He said that he had American friends keen on investing millions, and thus at least got a free meal out of the entire ordeal.

**Q: Now that you have crash tested China for a few years, what needs to be changed first?**

**A:** In terms of my day-to-day life, and this may seem trivial, but I think the buses need new brakes. I ride my bike everywhere in Beijing, and those bus brakes are enough to make me go deaf.





By Xie Xiaolin

Want to study in the UK? Want to immigrate to the UK? You will have to find a British school or employer to act as guarantor, and have sufficient funds to satisfy the UK government. Those are part of the new visa evaluation procedures under discussion by the UK government.

A team of experts from the British Home Office discussed the design of the new points-based system in Beijing late last year, which, declared the British Embassy in Beijing, will introduce a series of new measures to make the visa application procedure more transparent and efficient.

The changes have a great impact on the British migration and visa policies towards Chinese applicants, whether for work, study or travel. The embassy says the new draft will make the application procedure much easier for genuine Chinese applicants.

Meanwhile, the embassy also warns that ordinary Chinese applicants have to be aware of the new points system, especially when it comes to evaluations and guarantees.

The new policies are expected to come out in the coming March, but will not come into effect until spring 2007.

#### Points-Based System

Taking advantage of similar points systems in Australia and Canada, the proposed point system codifies the decision-making process into factors with details such as the order of preference for colleges. Applicants will have to complete an online self-assessment before they submit individual application documents to the embassy.

In this way, the current two-stage process of visa issuing will be replaced by a single stage. After the new policies are adopted, the three-day decision-making process will become shorter and easier.

Unlike before, high-risk applicants will be required to pay a bond before they gain their British visa. If these can-

# Migration to the UK: five-tier points system



Despite high costs and complicated visa applications, the UK is still one of the top destinations for Chinese students.

CFP Photo



Photos by sina.com

didates return to their home country or settle down as agreed, these bonds will be returned. But if there is any breach of the immigration rules the bonds will be forfeited.

In order to assess whether or not a bond is required on generic risk factors, countries and sectors will be allocated risk levels. However, the grading of these risks has not been settled yet.

Except for the most highly skilled, every applicant will need to provide a certificate of sponsorship. Only UK employers and educational institutions that have accepted certain responsibilities can issue the certificates. If a student applies to study in the UK but works in the country, the guarantor is required this to report to the authorities.

Students often received more than one offer from UK universities in the past. But now the registered school or the employer will be settled first on the visa before it is granted. These records will be kept on a register.

Therefore, if students transfer or job-hop after they arrive, they must apply for new visa with a new university or employer. The British Home Office will institute measures to ensure that sponsors comply with their responsibilities.

#### The five-year strategy

In fact this is only part of a points-based system for all who come to the UK to work and study. This system is included in the British government's five-year strategy for asylum and immigration published in February last year.

The strategy includes the roll-out of

Risk Assessment Units in visa-issuing posts overseas; test introductions of how to live in the UK for new citizens, as well as the continued roll-out of biometric finger-scanning expected to be effective globally by 2008.

Aiming to tighten the UK's borders, the strategy will also phase out low skilled employment routes and allow settlement only for skilled workers.

The UK has established 14 risk assessment units at selected posts overseas to adopt the new strategy. More units are expected to become operational in 2006.

Over 1,200 people have participated in face-to-face sector-based and regionally focused workshops across the UK, from July 19 – November 7 last year.

#### Sino-UK links

The five-year strategy should lead to an extended consultation with international partners, including China.

Around 48,000 Chinese students are studying in UK, making up 18 percent of non-EU students. China sends more students to the UK than any other non-EU country.

Furthermore, 6,470 UK work permits were issued to Chinese nationals in 2004. Chinese nationals had around 10 percent of work permits issued to skilled workers, the second highest after India.

Examples show that application processes have been effectively improved in the last five years: student visa applications grew by 100 percent between 2001 and 2004/5, from 12,446 to approximately 25,100.



## Living in America (6):

# People who don't beat you make you stronger

By Sai Ma

Last time we talked about how to make friends when abroad. Equally important is how to deal with people from other cultures and countries.

Three and half years ago, I was doing a master of public administration degree with about 100 other students from 27 countries. I was very excited to find that we were asked to conduct an in-depth case study of a local non-profit organization, where we would learn first hand about that organization's problems, and have a chance to prescribe concrete solutions.

However, after the random draw, I was a bit worried about my team: Roger, a friend from Peru, and BJ, an American whom I had heard, from several sources, was a snob from a rich

neighborhood in New York City.

Unfortunately, the whole semester followed that characterization: before an interview with the staff from the organization, BJ complained that Roger and I didn't dress well enough; during the interview he talked all the time leaving no time for us; he went to discuss our case with the class instructor, pretending only he did the work; and after the class he told other American students that we were slackers who let him do all the work. Even more irritating, he suggested foreign students should not be allowed to take such classes requiring advanced spoken English skills.

But the worst part was that he pretended to be the sweetest guy you could ever imagine. He always greeted us with a big

shining smile but bad mouthed us, behind our backs.

I was furious when I found out BJ was so hypocritical, but I reacted in a childish way. Very few people liked him, so some other students and I came up with a bunch of 'nice names' for him such as 'Big Jerk', or others not fit to print. Or, we purposely laughed as hard as possible in a statistics class when he asked the professor what ( meant. The fight between us heated up quickly.

Life sometimes is more dramatic than movies. On the first day of the very last required course before I could graduate, I found I was 'luckily' assigned to a team with BJ again!

Not even hesitating for a second, I stormed into the associated dean's office. I told her what

happened before and in tears, I said there was no way I can put up with him.

To my surprise, the associate dean, always so understanding and agreeable, kindly but steadily refused my request to switch teams. She said she had been aware of BJ's outrageous behavior and had warned him about it, but she also wanted me to learn how to handle people I didn't like.

"After all," she said, "you won't always work with people you like."

I was quite unhappy but realized she was right. I didn't handle the situation very well. When he didn't treat us fairly, I just ignored him instead of complaining or arguing with him. In Chinese culture, we tend to avoid confronting people direct-

ly, but Americans don't. I finally managed to tell him in person how I felt about the way he treated me and other foreign students, and I told him seriously that I would fight back this time. He looked stunned for a couple of seconds, and then said awkwardly that he wasn't aware of what he did and I should just kick his ass if it happens again.

The class went smoothly, and although we did not become friends, I learned to confront those negative feelings. Now I'd rather solve a problem before a situation gets bitter.

Sai Ma, was born in Beijing. Graduated from Beijing University in 2001. Now She is a Ph.D. candidate in Policy Analysis in Los Angeles, US. Email: saima@prgs.edu

## Ask Ayi:

**Q: I have worked for six years and want to go to Holland in the New Year. Are there any programs paid by the state?**

— Fiona Sun

**A:** In the New Year, China has launched one such program with Leiden University.

The program is open to majors of: telecommunications and information science, advanced technology for agriculture, life science and human health, materials, energy and environment, engineering science, applied social science and WTO-related courses.

As you have over two years of work experience, and are under 35 you should check <http://www.leiden.edu/> for master programs in English (such as MBA, MA, and MSc). There are only ten places available.

This program only required IELTS, over 6.5 marks and you have to apply before March 1, 2006, either by mail to Yue Tao (Ms.), Leiden University International Office, Gravensteent 2311 SR Leiden The Netherlands, or sending an email to: [t.yue@io.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:t.yue@io.leidenuniv.nl).

**Q: Can you tell me what agents are qualified to be a broker for study to Canada?**

— CaFun\_xu

**A:** The Ministry of Education has announced 390 legal broking agents for self-paid study abroad. The lists were updated on January 6.

The web, <http://www.jsj.edu.cn/mingdan/009xuhao1.html> has listed the name of each agent, its legal representative, address, order number of its qualification, and the valid period of its certificate.

Good luck.

(Edited by Xie Xiaolin)

## Exhibition provides vital info

By Xie Xiaolin

The 11th China International Education Exhibition Tour will be held in the World Trade Tower of Beijing February 17-18.

Over 350 universities or colleges from 27 countries, like the UK, US, Netherlands, Australia, Japan, and South Korea will give information on updated policies or scholarships for students and offer face-to-face consultations.

With the theme of 'Studying Abroad and Cultivating Diversified Talent', there will also be several related forums covering fields like education marketing, agent qualification approval and, education on techniques. It will invite experts from foreign embassies to give lectures on studying in their country.

The exhibition will then tour Xi'an, Chongqing, Shanghai, Xiamen, Shenzhen and Guangzhou until March 5. China has held ten such events in more than 20 cities in the past six years, attracting over 600 schools from 30 regions.

## Online checking system for foreign certificates

By Xie Xiaolin

Returning Chinese students can now check the quality and acceptability of their foreign academic degrees and certificates in China. The Ministry of Education launched the service at <http://renzheng.cscse.edu.cn> recently.

The Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE), the authorized agency under the ministry, conducts the service online.

Though still under construction, the online system is able to evaluate the degrees and certificates issued by the higher education institutions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Germany and the Netherlands.

You can consult with: [dipenquiry@cscse.com.cn](mailto:dipenquiry@cscse.com.cn). Hotline: 82300056, 82301009-103



Travel Tips

- Round-trip airfare from Beijing costs around 2,000 yuan
- Gyeongbokgung Palace is open daily (closed Tuesday) from 9:00am-6:00pm. Entrance is 3,000 won, half price for children and seniors
- Yongsusan Imperial Cuisine Restaurant + 82 739 5599
- Subway travel is highly developed and will take you to all major attractions; fare varies by distance traveled, starting at 1,500 won



Korean imperial architecture borrows heavily from Chinese tradition

# Seoul fully delicious

Stuff yourself silly on South Korea's unique nightlife and cuisine



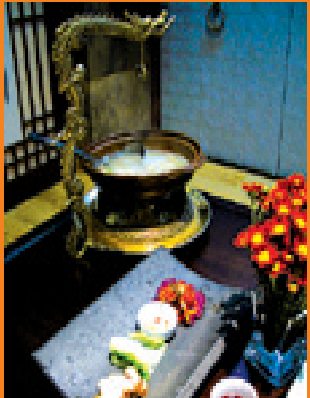
Pajeon pancakes in the making



Yakimandu, pan-fried dumplings



Hof pub, the Mu Bar is full of mystery



Delicacies fit for a king – or for you!



Standing watch over Gyeongbokgung Palace gates



Colorful signs invite you to drink in the Shinchon bar district



An enterprising auntie at work in her street-side diner

By An Jing

On any weekend day, Seoul's student population migrates in groups, clad in the requisite beige Burberry plaid, ponytails pulled through baseball caps, and floppy shoes to the nearest *hof* pub. They fill diners serving bulgogi beef, *pajeon* pancakes of scallion and seafood, and drink chilled milky rice wine, they debate politely, taking turns to speak, and listening attentively while others are speaking. They are living testimony to the refined and the communal nature of south Korean society, and they are only one small faction of Seoul's bustling nightlife, whose bounty of dining options and painless daytime outings make it an ideal weekend escape from Beijing.

Reasons why not to take a long weekend in south Korea's capital are disappearing as quickly as the digestive fluids in this writer's belly are churning at the thought of the mouthwatering mountains of spicy *kimchi*, lean cuts of kalbi beef char-grilled on your table and that Korean comfort food bibimbap getting crispy in a stone bowl.

originally built in 1395 as a tribute to the permanent happiness and prosperity of Korea's kings, their children and the people.

The sympathy of the Korean kings for their people is evident in Hanjeonoshik – Royal Court cuisine – as well. It seems that delicate servings, lavish surroundings are the only thing distinguishing it from the tasty grub you can find on offer all over Seoul.

Private rooms

Try stunning Yongsusan Imperial Cuisine restaurant, a quaint and pleasant ten-minute walk north of Gyeongbokgung Palace. Make dinner reservations for an after-palace meal to sit on the floor in cozy private rooms and watch the finely tuned wait staff orchestrate for you a meal in more tiny ceramic dishes than your cabinets could ever provide. Our set menus included cold, vinegary jellyfish and other pickles, and oysters on the half shell, whose fresh ocean blast we balanced with a sweet raspberry wine. In tune with mere commoners' supper table was the delicious *bulgogi* – thinly sliced sweet marinated beef – and *chongchol* – mushroom stew – and fill up on *nudungji* – burnt rice soup – featuring that coveted, most crisp-crunchedy delicious part of any stone bowl *bibimbap*.

The 'Korean Wave' has washed over China, leaving cultural tidal pools of pop stars like Rain and wildly successful TV dramas like *Da Chang Jin*, and a trickling of fashion copycats, who can be spotted on Beijing's streets clad in loose sweaters and khakis, silver hoop earrings and boxy horn-rimmed glasses. Pilgrimage to the cultural-export powerhouse for an authentic taste of this unique culinary peninsula, and see the heart of the beast.

Granny-run

Exceedingly polite, but with social etiquette thankfully nowhere nearly as rigid as the Japanese, Seoul's streets are busy and clean. First on your dining agenda is indulging in the street food selections found everywhere, ranging from standing-street-room only, to granny-run, tent-covered folding table establishments. Try *yakimandu*, pan-fried dumplings, for around 2,000 won for plate of five; they sometimes comes accompanied by a cup of steaming broth – this is 'service', the Korean name for courteous freebies that come with your order at many restaurants and eateries.

The best place to stroll and munch is the Dongdaemun district, reachable by subway. But don't be fooled by the seaweed wrap, called *gimbap*, you see on carts all over – it's not nori sushi, but rather a much thicker wrap of vegetables and rice. Those buffet sized, foil-lined pans of stir-fried rice cakes are called *tteokbokki*; those gummy glutinous-rice logs are stewed in sauces of varying spiciness. Beware of deep red... milder palates should look for *odenig* – hot broth with fishcakes (usually on sticks) and not try to compete with the red pepper immune Korean tongues.

Weekend visits should include the capital's imperial abode; Gyeongbokgung Palace stands in the center of the city, and is now inhabited only in the daytime, by photogenic costumed guards and photo-op friendly princes and their mock entourages. The palace is a treasured tourist destination, and testimony to the fully rehabilitated state of nationalistic pride that currently grips Korea; the palace that was destroyed and occupied by Japanese occupation in the mid-20th century was fully restored and rebuilt in the during the 1990s. Named 'Gyeongbok' or 'Shining Happiness', it was

Don't be fooled by the sophisticatedly tiny portions, we could hardly finish our desert of *ddok* – sweet rice cakes with red bean paste served with delicious 'nostalgic' persimmon punch.

Korean family style restaurants generally specialize in one type of food, like the seollongtang joints serving a slow boiled beef bone soup served with sliced beef, noodles, rice and scallions that is eaten with generous portion of homemade *dakgugi* radish and cabbage kimchi... or *kalbi* barbeque houses, where the prime cut beef is cooked on hot plates at your table then wrapped in fresh lettuce leaves and usually paired with *toenjangchigae* – soybean paste soup with tofu, zucchini, hot peppers, onion and potato. It's easy browsing in lively Shinchon university district for eateries that suit your tastes and atmospheric needs.

Atmosphere

Seoul's unique nightlife atmosphere is incarnated in wacky themed bars and cafes; marvel at the incredible detail with which these trendy hangouts are conceived and furnished. The Shinchon district provides an endless bounty for wandering bar hoppers and fans of soju – Korean rice wine. Stumbled into the magic mushroom themed (perhaps inspired) Mu Bar, where the soju comes in colored, fruity flavors, the ceilings are magical rivers of DIY engineering genius, and the bathrooms prove even more magical delights...

The Princess Bar was every alcoholic teenage-girl's dream: canopy beds to sit languish under and tiffany lamps on every table. A vanity table is piled with cosmetics and nail-paints, and gold lacquer do-dads are everywhere, littered among the armies of ceramic figurines and pearl embellishments. To our non-gender discriminating surprise, the place was a popular place for macho men as well.

Even if the Korean nationalistic/ethnic pride will burn you like a fiery hot mouthful of kimchi, remember that according to the peninsula's natives, that spice keeps away those nasty airborne diseases like SARS and avian flu. Making it to Seoul for a long, indulgent weekend is probably just any kalbi house fan in Beijing should start saving for. For if you believed that all East Asian capitals look and feel the same, you obviously haven't learned to look, or taste, past your nose.